

SOME  
DISCOURSES,  
SERMONS  
AND  
REMAINS

Of the Reverend

Mr. Jos. Glanvil,  
Late Rector of BATH, and  
Chaplain in Ordinary to His MAJESTY.

Collected into one Volume, and published  
BY  
ANT. HORNECK, Preacher at the SAVOY.

Together with a

SERMON  
Preached at his FUNERAL by Joseph Pleydell,  
Arch-Deacon of CHICHESTER.

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DISCOVERIES  
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AND  
REMARKS

Mr. John Gualtieri,

Late Rector of St. Paul's Church,

in the City of New York.

Collected into one Volume, and printed

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# THE PREFACE TO THE READER.

**T**O recommend these Sermons to the World were to write a Panegyrick upon Light, and to attempt to make that amiable to the Spectator, which challenges acceptance by its own brightness. The Oriental Pearl needs not the flattering praises of the greedy Jeweller, nor the Stone that is digg'd out of the Mines of Golconda the faint Encomium's of the crafty Merchant.

The Author of these Discourses, as his Wit lay out of the common road, so this genuine off-spring of his fertile brain soars above the common level of Ecclesiastical Orations. Death seemed to envy the vast parts of so great a man, and in the ascent of his Age, snatch't him away, when the learned world expected some of his greatest attempts, and enterprizes. As he valued no notions, that were mean and trivial, so those, he hath sent abroad, savour of a more than ordinary genius. His Soul seemed to be spun of a finer thread than those of other mortals, and things look'd with another face, when they passed through the quicker fire of his Laboratory.

Some curious Artists, though their work is materially the same with that of meaner Artificers, yet the shape they give it, and the neatness of the Fabrick, makes it seem a thing composed of different ingredients.



## The Preface to the Reader.

Even the most obvious truths, when coming from our Author received a greater Lustre; and that meat, which familiarity made in a manner nauseous to some nicer Pallats, when dress'd with his Sauce, became more pungent, and consequently more acceptable.

And though I am not able to bring in a list of the persons, who have been effectually wrought upon by his Sermons, and become eminent Saints under his Ministry, Yet Charity bids us believe, that not a few by his means turned Profelytes of Righteousness; though if his pains had proved unsuccessful, it could have been no disparagement to his glory.

Providence is sometimes pleased for reasons best known to it self, to cast mens lots in places, where they cannot boast of many converts made by their Preaching, and I have been acquainted with some, who have spoke it with Sorrow, that in ten years time they could not say, that any of their constant hearers had come to them to beg directions, how to perfect holiness in the fear of God. One would admire that men of that life and power (as I have known some to be) should work no greater wonders: and yet we have not a few parallel examples in the Gospel: and when the Son of God himself, could make no impression upon the men of Capernaum, we need not marvel, if his servants meet sometimes with the like repulses; but this doth not lessen their reward, no more than the ineffectual attempts of Ezechiel made him shine with less brightness in the Firmament of Heaven. And where such labours are lost, they do indeed aggravate the hearers guilt, but do not frustrate the Labourer of his recompence.

To continue barren under such Thunders, is to prepare for the scourge of Scorpions, and where men remain unmoved under sound and affectionate teaching, they make way for their greater Agonies.

His Sermons as they were very solid, so they were (which is the grace and life of them) pathetick, and by his zeal and fervour one might guess, how big his desire unto God for Israel

## The Preface to the Reader.

rael was, that they might be saved; Though he met sometimes with disappointments, yet he remembered he was a Christian. And as he was not without his crosses, so he carried himself under them like a true Philosopher. His mind seemed to be serene, when things went most contrary to his wishes: and whatever storm the inconstancy and fickleness of sublunary objects threw upon him, within still he felt a calm, beyond that of Socrates, when the ungrateful Athenians sent him the fatal draught to drink his death and ruine.

He had a mind fitted for Contemplation, and his thoughts could dwell on a Divine Object, till he had suckt out the Cream and Marrow. His Divinity like his Philosophy was free from Dogmatizing, and while he tyed himself to no words, he arrived to a clearer apprehension of truth and error. The Divine Plato was somewhat dearer to him than the subtler Aristotle; and it cannot be otherwise, where souls long to be transformed into the Image of the Deity. Nothing seemed to ingross his desire so much as the reformation of an unbelieving world, and indeed there were few men fitter for that enterprize, God having blessed him with a considerable stock both of Reason and Eloquence. To a clarified mind the gross Atheistical surmises of Modern Wits, must needs be exceeding fulsome: and no marvel if Souls so fine, break forth sometimes into very severe Satyrs, to lash this petulant humour. If any thing could raise his passion, it was the non-sensical discourses of DEISTS and Christian Infidels, and he thought he might be justly angry with such wretches, that like the Giants of old, durst make War with Tremendous Omnipotence.

He loved not to envelop Theological Doctrines in mysterious phrases, and ever thought that Divinity best agreed with the mind of the Holy Ghost, that was expressed in rational and intelligible propositions.

He was never any great Admirer of our Modern Illuminati, and he counted that discourse but little better than Non-sense, which affected to recommend it self to the admiration of  
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## The Preface to the Reader.

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*the hearer by its not being understood: Where his Reason  
tyred, and could give him no direction, he was willing to take  
Faith for his Guide; and though he confessed, that not a few  
things in Scripture were altogether unaccountable to his un-  
derstanding, yet he doubted not, but they would all be made  
clear in that State, where we shall know even as we are known.  
This puts me in mind of the Motto, which a Friend of the In-  
genious Mr. Culverwell hath added to his Sermons, and which  
may serve as an Epilogue to this Preface,*

*What this, we shall know as we are known, may be  
The Author could not tell, He is gone to see.*

Anthony Horneck.

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S E R-

S E R M O N I.  
T H E  
Way of Happiness.

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*The Fourth Edition.*

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THE  
Ways of the World

AND THE

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# SERMON I.

LUKE 13. 24.

*Strive to enter in at the strait Gate : For many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.*



**W**HEN I consider the *goodness* of God ; and the *merits* of his Son, our Saviour ; and the *Influences* of the Holy Spirit ; and all the *advantages* of the Gospel ; The *certainty* of its Principles, the *reasonableness* of its duties, the *greatness* of its ends, the *suitableness* of its means, the *glory* of its Rewards, and the *Terrour* of its punishments ; I say,

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when



when I consider *these*, and then look upon *Man* as a reasonable Creature, apprehensive of *Duty*, and *interest*; and apt to be moved by *hopes* and *fears*; I cannot but wonder, and be astonished to think, that notwithstanding *all this*, the far greater part of men should finally miscarry, and be undone. 'Tis possible *some* such Considerations might be the occasion of the *question* propounded to our Saviour in the verse immediately foregoing the Text. ---Lord, are there *Few that be saved*? God is Love, and all the Creatures are *His*, and Man a nobler sort: *He* is the *Lover of Men*, and *Thou* art the *Redeemer of Men*; and though *Man* hath *offended*, yet God is propense to *pardon*, and in *Thee* he is reconciled; He is desirous of our *Happiness*, and *Thou* art come into the world to offer, and promote it; and the *Holy Ghost* is *powerful* and *ready* to assist our endeavours; We were made for happiness, and we seek it; And Lord, are there *Few that be saved*? The Text is Christ's return to the Question, *Strive to enter in at the strait Gate*; for many, *I say unto you, will seek to enter, and shall not be able*. In which words we have three things.

(I) An Answer imply'd; *strait is the Gate*.

(II) A duty exprest, *strive to enter*.

(III) A Consideration to engage our greater care

care and diligence in the Duty ; *For many will seek to enter, and shall not be able.*

By the *Gate*, we may understand the entrance, and all the *way of Happiness*, and that is, *Religion* : By the *straitness* of it ; the *Difficulties* we are to encounter. By *striving* ; earnest and sincere *endeavour* : By *seeking* ; an *imperfect striving*. And from the words thus briefly explain'd, These Propositions offer themselves to our Consideration.

I. There are many and great difficulties in Religion, *The Gate is strait.*

II. The difficulties may be overcome by striving, *Strive to enter.*

III. There is a sort of striving that will not procure an entrance, *For many will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.*

I begin with the First in order, viz. *That there are many and great difficulties in Religion* ; And to what I have to say about it, I premise this negative Consideration : That,

*The Difficulties of Religion do not lye in the Understanding. Religion is a plain thing, and easie to be understood. 'Tis no deep subtilty, or high-strain'd notion ; 'tis no gilded fancy, or elaborate exercise of the brain ; 'Tis not plac'd in the clouds.*



of Imagination, nor wrapt up in mystical cloathing; But 'tis obvious and familiar, easie and intelligible; First preach't by Fishermen and Mechanicks, without pomp of speech, or height of speculation; addrest to Babes and Plebeian heads; and intended to govern the wills of the honest and sincere; and not to exercise the wits of the notional, and curious. So that we need not mount the wings of the wind to fetch Religion from the stars; nor go down to the deep to fetch it up from thence; For 'tis with us, and before us, as open as the day, and as familiar as the light. The great Precepts of the Gospel are cloathed in Sun-beams, and are as visible to the common eye, as to the Eagle upon the highest perch. 'Tis no piece of wit or subtilty to be a Christian, nor will it require much study, or learned retirement to understand the Religion we must practise. That which was to be known of God, was manifest to the very Heathen, Rom. 1. 19. The Law is light, saith Solomon, Prov. 6. 13. And 'tis not only a single passing glance on the eye; but 'tis put into the heart, and the promise is, that we shall all know him, from the greatest to the least. Our duty is set up in open places, and shone upon by a clear Beam; 'Twas written of old upon the plain Tables of Habakkuk, Hab. 2. 2. So that the running Eye might see and read: And the Religion of the

the H. *Jesus*, like *himself*, came into the world with *Rays* about its Head.

Religion, I say, is *clear*, and *plain*, and what is not so, may concern the *Theatre*, or the *Schools*; may entertain mens *Wits*, and serve the Interests of *Disputes*; but 'tis nothing to Religion, 'tis nothing to the *Interest* of mens *Souls*.

Religion was once a *Mystery*, but the *Mystery* is revealed; And those things that we yet count *Mysteries*, are plainly enough discover'd as to their being such as we believe them, though we cannot understand the *manner how*; and 'tis no part of Religion to enquire into that; but rather It enjoyns us meekly to acquiesce in the plain declarations of Faith without bold scrutiny into hidden things. In short I say, the *difficulties* of Religion are not in the *Understanding*; In *prompto & facili est eternitas*, said the Father; The affairs of eternity depend on things *Easie* and *Familiar*. And I premise this to prevent dangerous mistakes.

But though Religion be so facile and plain a thing to be understood, yet the way to *Heaven* is no broad, or *easie* Path; The Gate is strait enough for all that; and I now come to shew what are the real *difficulties* of Religion, and whence they arise.



I. One great Difficulty ariseth from the depravity of our Natures. The Scripture intimates, That we are conceived in sin, Psalm 53. 5. Transgressors from the Womb, Isaiah 48. 8. Children of Wrath, Ephes. 2. 3. And we find by Experience that we bring vile Inclinations into the World with us. Some are naturally Cruel, and Injurious; Proud, and Imperious; Lustful, and Revengeful; Others, Covetous, and Unjust; Humourous, and Discontented; Treacherous, and False: And there is scarce an instance of habitual vice, or villany, but some or other are addicted to it by their particular Make and Natures: I say, their Natures, for certainly it is not true what some affirm, to serve their Opinions, in contradiction to Experience; That Vices are not in Mens natural Propensions; but instill'd by corrupt Education, evil Customs and Examples: For we see that those whose Education hath been the same, do yet differ extreamly from each other in their inclinations; And some whose Breeding hath been careless, and loose, who have seen almost nothing else but Examples of Vice; and been instructed in little, besides the arts of Vanity and Pleasure; I say, there are such who notwithstanding these their unhappy circumstances, discover none of those vile Inclinations, and Propensions, that are  
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in others, whose Education hath been very strict, and advantageous. This I think is enough to shew that many of our evil habits are from Nature, and not from Custom only.

And yet I cannot say that Humane nature is so debauched, that every Man is inclin'd to every Evil by it: For there are those, who by their Tempers are averse to some kind of Vices, and naturally disposed to the contrary Vertues; some by their Constitutions are inclined to hate Cruelty, Covetousness, Lying, Impudence and Injustice; and are by Temper, Merciful, Liberal, Modest, True and Just. There are kinds of Vices which our Natures almost universally rise against, as many Bestialities, and some horrid Cruelties; and all men, except Monsters in Humane form, are disposed to some Vertues, such as Love to Children, and Kindness to Friends and Benefactors. All this I must confess and say, because Experience constrains me; and I do not know why Systematick Notions should sway more than that.

But notwithstanding these last concessions, 'tis evident enough that our Natures are much vitiated, and depraved; and this makes our business in the way of Religion, difficult. For our work is, to cleanse our Natures; and to destroy those Evil Inclinations; to crucifie the Old Man; Rom. 6. 6. and to purge out the old Leaven; 1 Cor. 5. 7. This is Religion, and the Way of Happiness, which must



needs be very difficult, and *uneasie*. For the vices of *Inclination* are very dear, and *grateful* to us; They are our *Right Hands*, and our *Right Eyes*, and esteemed as our *Selves*: So that to cut off, and pluck out *these*, and to bid defiance to, and wage War against our selves; to destroy the first-born of our Natures, and to lop off our own Limbs; This cannot but be very *Irkesome* and *Displeasing* Employment; and this is one chief business; and a considerable thing that makes *Religion* difficult.

II. Another *Difficulty* ariseth from the *Influence* of the *Senses*. We are *Creatures* of *sense*, and sensible things do most powerfully move us; we are born *Children*, and live at first the life of *Beasts*: That Age receives deep Impressions; and those are made by the *senses*, whose Interest grows strong, and establisht in us before we come to the use of *Reason*; and after we have arrived to the exercise of that, sensible objects still possess our *Affections*, and sway our *Wills*, and fill our *Imaginations*, and influence our *Understandings*; so that we love, and hate; we desire and choose; we fancy, and we discourse according to those *Impressions*; and hence it is that we are enamour'd of *Trifles*, and fly from our *Happiness*; and pursue *Vexation*, and embrace *Misery*; and imagine *Perversely*, and reason *Childishly*: for the influence of the Body and its Senses are the chief  
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Fountains of Sin, and Folly, and Temptation: Upon which accounts it was that the Platonical Philosophers declaim'd so earnestly against the Body, and ascrib'd all Evils and Mischief to it; calling vice *κακία βρυα*, corporeæ Pestes, material Evils, and bodily Plagues. And the Apostle that understood it better, calls Sin by the name of *Flesh*, Gal. 5. 17. *Works of the Flesh*, Gal. 5. 19. *Law of the Members*, Rom. 7. 23. and cries out upon the Body of this Death, Rom. 7. 24.

And now this is our natural Condition, a state subject to the prevalent influences of Sense, and by this means to Sin and Temptation; and 'tis our Work in Religion, to mortifie the Body, Rom. 8. 13. and to cease from making provision for the flesh, Rom. 13. 14. and from fulfilling the Lusts thereof, Gal. 5. 14. To render our selves dead to the prevalent life of Sense, and Sin, Rom. 6. 8. and 11. 5. and to arise to a new Life, Rom. 6. 4. The Life of Righteousness, and Faith, Hab. 2. 4. A Life that hath other Principles, and other Pleasures; other Objects, and other Ends, and such as neither Eye hath seen, nor Ear heard, nor any of the Senses perceived. Yea, this is a Life that is exercised in contradiction to the Judgements of sense. Its Joy, is Tribulation; Jam. 1. 2. Its Glory, Reproaches; 2 Pet. 4. 14. Its Height is Lowness; Luke 14. 11. Its Greatness, in being Meaneſt; Matth. 20. 27.



And its Riches, in having *Nothing*; 2 Cor. 6. 10. To such a Life as *this*, Religion is to raise us; and it must needs be *difficult* to make *us*, who are so much *Brutes*, to be so much *Angels*; *us*, who seem to live by nothing else but *sense*, to live by *nothing less*; This with a witness is an *hard*, and *uneasie* Work, and another *difficulty* in Religion.

III. A Third proceeds from the natural *Disorder* and *Rage* of our *Passions*. Our *Corrupt Natures* are like the *troubled Sea*, Isa. 57. 20. And our *Passions* are the *Waves* of that Ocean, that *tumble* and *swell*, and keep a mighty noise; they dash against the *Rocks*, and break one against another; and our *Peace* and *Happiness* is shipwrackt by them. Our *Passions make us miserable*. We are sometime *stifled* by their *Numbers*, and *confoanded* by their *Disorders*, and *torn to pieces* by their *Violence*; mounted to the *Clouds* by *Ambition*, and thrown down to the *deep* by *Despair*; scorcht by the *flames* of *Lust*, and overwhelmed by the *Waters* of *unstable Desire*; *Passions fight one against another*, and all against *reason*; they prevail over the *Mind*, and have *usurpt* the *Government* of our *Actions*, and involve us in continual *Guilt* and *Misery*. This is the *natural State* of *Man*; and our *work* in the way of *Religion*, is to *restrain* this *Violence*; and to *rectifie* these *Disorders*, and to *re-*  
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duce those *Rebellious Powers* under the *Empire* and *Government* of the *Mind*, their *Sovereign*. And so to regain the *Divine Image*, which consists much in the order of our *Faculties*; and the *Subjection* of the *Brutish*, to the *reasonable Powers*. This, I say, Religion aims at, to raise us to the *perfection* of our *Natures*, by *mortifying* those *Members*, Col. 3. 5. our *unruly Passions* and *Desires*; and *crucifying* the *Flesh*, with its *Affections* and *Lusts*; Gal. 5. 24. And thereby to make us *humble* in *Prosperity*, *quiet* in *Adversity*; *meek* under *Provocations*, *steady* amidst *Temptations*, *modest* in our *Desires*, *temperate* in our *Injoyments*, *constant* to our *Resolutions*, and *contented* in all *Conditions*: Here is our great *Business*, and our *Work* is this: And certainly 'tis no *easy* thing to bring order out of a *Chaos*, and to speak a *Tempest* into a *Calm*; to resist a *Torrent*, and to stop and turn the *Tyde*; to subdue a *Rebellious Rabble*, and to change them from *Tyrannical Masters*, to *Modest* and *Obedient Servants*: These, no doubt, are works of *difficulty* enough, and these must be our *Employment* in the way of *Religion*; and on this score also, the *Gate is strait*.

IV. Our *Work* in *Religion* is yet more *difficult*, upon the account of *Custom*, to which we are subject, and by which we are swayed much. This is vulgarly said to be *another Nature*, and the *Apostle* calls it:



it by that name, 1 Cor. 11. 14. Doth not Nature it self teach you, that if a Man have long Hair, it is a shame unto him? By the word Nature, the best Interpreters say only Custom is meant; since long Hair is not declared shameful by the Law, and Light of Nature, taken in its chief and properest sense: For then it had never been permitted to the Nazarites: But the contrary custom, in the Nations that used it not, made it seem shameful and indecent. There are other places in Scripture and ancient Authors, wherein Nature is put for Custom: But I must not insist on this; the thing I am about is, that Custom is very powerful; and as it makes a kind of Nature, so, many times it masters and subdues it. Wild Creatures are hereby made gentle and familiar; and those that naturally are tame enough, are made to degenerate into wildness by it.

And now besides the original depravities of our Natures, we have contracted many vicious habits by corrupt and evil usages; which we were drawn into at first by pleasure and vanity in our young and inconsiderate years, while we were led by the directions of sense: These, by frequent acts, grow at last into habits; which though in their beginning they were tender as a Plant, and easie to have been crusht or blasted, yet time and use hardens them into the firmness of an Oak, that  
braves

braves the Weather, and can endure the stroke of the Ax and a strong Arm.

Now to destroy and root up these obstinate customary evils, is another part of our Work. And Religion teacheth us to put off concerning the Old Conversation, the Old Man, Eph. 4. 22. and to receive new Impressions and Inclinations; to be renewed in the spirit of our Minds, 5. 23. and to put on the New Man, 5. 24. To make us new Hearts, Ezek. 18. 31. and to walk in newness of Life, Rom. 6. 4. This we are to do, and this we may well suppose to be hard work; the Scripture compares it to the changing the Skin of the *Æthiopian*, and the Spots of the Leopard, Jer. 13. 23. and elsewhere. *How can they do good, that are accustomed to do evil?* Jer. 13. 23. 'Tis hard, no doubt; and this is another difficulty in Religion.

V. The Power that Example hath over us, makes the way of Religion difficult. Example is more prevalent than Precept, for Man is a Creature given much to Imitation, and we are very apt to follow what we see others do, rather than what we ought to do our selves.

And now the Apostle hath told us, That the whole World lies in Wickedness, 1 Joh. 5. 19. and we sadly find it: we cannot look out of doors, but we see Vanity and Folly, Sensuality and Forgetfulness of God;



God; Pride and Covetousness, Injustice and Intemperance, and all other kinds of Evils: These we meet with every where, in Publick Companies, and Private Conversations; in the High Ways, and in the Corners of the Streets.

The Sum is, Example is very powerful, and Examples of Vice are always in our Eyes; we are apt to be reconciled to that which every one doth, and to do like it; we love the trodden Path, and care not to walk in the Way which is gone in but by a few.

This is our Condition, and our work in Religion is, to overcome the strong Bias of corrupt Example; to strive against the Stream, to learn to be good, though few are so, and not to follow a Multitude to do Evil, Exod. 23. 2. This is our Business; and this is very Difficult.

VI. The last Difficulty I shall mention, ariseth from Worldly Interests and Engagements. We have many Necessities to serve, both in our Persons, and our Families. Nature excluded us naked into the World, without Cloathing for Warmth, or Armature for Defence; and Food is not provided to our Hands, as it is for the Beasts; nor do our Houses grow for our Habitation, and comfortable abode. Nothing is prepared for our use without our Industry and Endeavours. So that by  
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the Necessity of this State, we are engaged in *Worldly Affairs*: These, Nature requires us to mind, and Religion permits it; and nothing can be done without our Care; and Care would be very troublesome, if there were not some Love to the Objects we exercise our Cares upon: Hence it is, that some Cares about the things of this world, and Love to them is allowed us; and we are commanded to continue in the Calling wherein God hath set us, 1 Cor. 7. 20. and are warned that we be not slothful in Business, Rom. 12. 11. We may take some delight also in the Creatures that God gives us, and love them in their degree: For the animal Life may have its moderate Gratifications; God made all things, that they might enjoy their Being.

And now, notwithstanding all this, Religion commands us to set our Affections upon things above, Col. 3. 2. not to love the World, 1 Joh. 2. 15. to be careful for nothing, Phil. 4. 6. to take no thought for to morrow, Mat. 6. 34. The meaning of which Expressions is, That we should love God and Heavenly things, in the chief and first place; and avoid the immoderate Desires of Worldly Love and Cares. This is our Duty: and 'tis very difficult: For by reason of the hurry of Business, and those Passions that Earthly Engagements excite; we consider not things as we should, and so, many times perceive not the Bounds of our Permissions, and the Begin-



nings of our Restraints; where the allowed Measure ends, and the forbidden Degree commenceth: what is the difference between that Care that is a Duty, and that which is a Sin; Providence and Carking; and between that Love of the World which is Necessary and Lawful, and that which is Extra-vagant and Inordinate? I say, by reason of the hurry we are in, amidst Business and worldly Delights, we many times perceive not our Bounds, and so slide easily into Earthly-mindedness and anxiety. And it is hard for us, who are engaged so much in the World, and who need it so much, who converse so much with it and about it, and whose time and endeavours are so unavoidably taken up by it; I say 'tis hard for us, in such Circumstances, to be crucified to the World, Gal. 6. 14. and to all inordinate Affections to it: to live above it, and to settle our chief Delights, and Cares on things at great distance from us, which are unsuitable to our corrupt Appetites, and contrary to the most relishing Injoyments of Flesh; which Sense never saw nor felt, and which the Imagination it self could never grasp. This, no doubt, is hard Exercise, and this must be done in the way of Religion; and on this Account also, it is very difficult.

Thus of the First Proposition, That there are great Difficulties in Religion. I come now to the Second.

II. That

II. **T**hat those Difficulties may be overcome by striving; which imports both the Encouragement, and the Means; That they may be vanquish'd, and how.

(1.) That the Difficulties may be subdued, is clearly enough implied, in the Precept; we should not have been commanded to strive, if it had been impossible to overcome. God doth not put his Creatures upon fruitless Undertakings: He never requires us to do any thing in order to that, which is not to be attained. Therefore when he was resolved not to be intreated for that stubborn and rebellious Nation; He would not have the Prophet pray for them, *Jer. 7. 16. Pray not for this People, for I will not hear thee.* He would not be petitioned for that, which he was determined not to grant. He puts not his Creatures upon any vain Expectations and Endeavours; nor would he have them deceive themselves by fond Dependences. When one made this Profession to our Saviour, *Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest*; Christ tells him, that he must expect from him no worldly Honours or Preferments; no Power or sensual Pleasure, no, not so much as the ordinary Accommodations of Life: *The Foxes have Holes, and the Birds of the Air have Nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his Head, Luk.*



9. 5, 8. He would not have the man that likely might look for *these*, upon the opinion of his being the *Messias*, in the *Jewish* sense, one that should at last, whatever the meanness of his Condition, was at present, appear as a *Mighty*, and *Triumphant* temporal Monarch; I say, our Saviour would not have the Man follow him for *that*, which he had not to bestow upon him. Since then that he who would not put us upon *fruitless* labours, hath commanded us to *strive* to enter; 'tis evident, that an entrance may be procured into the Gate by *striving*, and that the *Difficulties* may be overcome.

The next thing in my Method is to shew, *How*; the manner is implied in the Text; and exprest in the Proposition, viz. By *striving*; and by this, is meant, a *resolute* use of those means that are the Instruments of Happiness. They are three, *Faith*, *Prayer*, and *active Endeavour*.

(I.) *Faith* is a chief Instrument, for the overcoming the *Difficulties* of our way.

And *Faith* in the general, is the belief of a *Testimony*; *Divine Faith* the belief of a *Divine Testimony*; and the chief things to be believed, as *encouragements* and means for a *Victory* over the *Difficulties* in Religion, are *these*; That God is reconciled to us by his Son; That he will assist our weak endeavours by the Aids of his Spirit; That he will reward us if we strive as we ought,

ought, with immortal Happiness in a World of endless Glory.

By our belief of God's being reconciled, we are secured from those fears, that might discourage our approaches and endeavours, upon the account of his Purity and Justice. By the Faith of his Assistance, all the objections against our striving, that arise from the greatness of the Difficulties, and the disproportionate smallness of our Strength, are answered. And from our believing eternal rewards in another World, we have a mighty motive to engage our utmost diligence, to contest with all difficulties that would keep us from it.

What satisfaction is there, saith the believer, in the gratification of my corrupt Inclinations and Senses, in comparison with that, which ariseth from the favour of God, and an Interest in his Son? What difficulties in my Duty, too great for Divine Aids? What pains are we to undergo in the narrow and difficult way, that the Glory which is at the end of it, will not compensate? What is it to deny a base Inclination that will undo me; in obedience to him that made, and redeemed me; and to despise the little things of present sense, for the hope of everlasting enjoyments; Trifling pleasure, for Hallelujahs? What were it for me to set vigorously upon those Passions that degrade my noble Nature, and make me a slave and a beast, and will make me more vile, and more miserable; when the Spirit of the  
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most High is at my right hand to assist me? Why should my noble Faculties, that were designed for glorious ends, be led into infamous practices by *base Usages*, and *dishonourable Customs*? What is the example of a *wicked, sensual, wretched World*, to that of the *Holy Jesus*; and all the *Army of Prophets, Apostles and Martyrs*? What is there in the *World*, that it should be loved more than *God*? and what is the *Flesh*, that it should have more of our time and care, than the great interests of our Souls?

Such are the *Considerations* of a mind, that Faith hath awakened; and by them it is prepared for *vigorous striving*. So that Faith is the *Spring of all*; and *necessary* to the other two *Instruments* of our *Happiness*. Besides which, it is acceptable to God, in it *self*, and so disposeth us for his *gracious helps*, by which we are enabled to overcome the *Difficulties* of our way. While a man considers the *Difficulties* only, and weighs them against his own *strength*, let him suppose the *Liberty* of his *Will* to be what he pleaseth, yet while 'tis under such *disadvantages*, that will signify very little; and he that sees no further, sits down in *discouragement*; But when the mind is fortified with the firm belief of *Divine help*, he attempts then with a *noble vigour*, which cannot miscarry, if it do not cool and faint. For he that endures to the end, shall be saved, Mat. 24. 13. Thus Faith sets the other

other Instruments of Happiness on work, and therefore 'tis deservedly reckoned as the first; and 'tis that which must always accompany the exercises of Religion, and give them life and motion.

(II.) Prayer is another means we must use, in order to our overcoming the Difficulties of the way. Our own meer, natural Strength is weakness; and without supernatural helps those Difficulties are not to be surmounted. Those Aids are necessary, and God is ready to bestow them on us; For He would have all men to be saved, and to come to the Knowledge of the Truth, 1 Tim. 2. 4. But for these things he will be sought unto. And 'tis very just, and fit that we should address our selves to him by Prayer, to acknowledge our own insufficiency, and dependence on him for the mercies we expect; and thereby to own Him for the giver of every good and perfect gift; and to instruct our selves how his favours are to be received and used, viz. with Reverence and Thanksgiving: This, 'tis highly fit we should do; and the doing it prepares us for his blessings; and he fails not to bestow them on those that are prepared by Faith and Prayer; For he giveth liberally and upbraids not; And our Prayers are required, not as if they could move his will, which is always graciously inclined to our Happiness;



pinefs; But as it's *that* tribute which we owe our Maker and Benefactor; and *that* without which 'tis not so fit he should bestow his particular favours on us. For it by no means becomes the Divine Majesty, to vouchsafe the *specialties* of his Grace and Goodness to those, that are not *sensible* they want them; and are not humbled to a due apprehension of their *weakness* and dependence. But for such as are so, and express their humble desires in the *Ardours* of Holy Prayer, God never denies them the *assurances* of his Spirit: For if ye being evil (saith our Saviour) know how to give good gifts unto your Children, how much more shall your Father which is in Heaven give good things to those that ask Him? Mat. 7. 11.

And These Divine Helps obtain'd by Faith and Prayer, and join'd with our *active* constant endeavour, will not fail to enable us to overcome the *Difficulties*, and to procure us an entrance at the *strait* Gate. And so I come to the *Third Instrument* of our Happiness, which is implied in *striving*, viz.

(III.) *Active Endeavour*, in which Repentance and the *fruits* of it are implied; Both Faith and Prayer are in order to *this*; and without it neither can turn to account. For Faith without works is dead, Jam. 2. 20. and Prayer, without endeavour, fruitless; yea indeed, in the Divine Estimate, it is

is none at all: 'Tis bodily exercise; no Prayer. For when we invoke Gods help, we desire it, that we may use it; Divine Grace is not a Treasure to lay up by us, but an Instrument to work with; and when we pray that God would assist us in our endeavours, and endeavour not at all, we mock God, and trifle with him in our Prayers: Endeavour then is necessary, and necessary in a degree so eminent, that this is always included in Faith when 'tis taken in the highest and noblest Evangelical sense, viz. for the Faith which justifies and saves; for that comprehends all those endeavours, and their fruits, whereby we are made happy.

We must not expect that God should do all (exclusively) in the work of our Salvation. He doth his part, and we must do ours; (though we do that, by his help too.) He that made us without our selves, will not save us without our selves, said the Father. We are commanded to seek, Mat. 7. 7. To Run, 1 Cor. 9. 24. To fight, 1 Tim. 6. 12. To give diligence, 2 Pet. 1. 10. These all import Action and Endeavour. And that endeavour must not be only a faint purpose, or formal service; but it must be imployed in the highest degree of Care and Diligence. The Kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence, Mat. 11. 12. and this violence must not be used in an heat, and sudden fit only, that cools and dies, and contents it self with having been warm for a time: But it must be a  
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steady and constant course of Activity, a continual striving to overcome the remaining difficulties of the way.

We must endeavour vigorously and constantly; and in that, (after our Faith is strengthened by deep consideration, and Divine assistance implored by ardent Prayer) our course is,

(1.) To abstain from all the outward actions of Sin, and to perform the external acts of the contrary Vertues. To cease to do evil, Isa. 1. 16. is the first step. When the Publicans askt John the Baptist, Luke 3. 12. what they should do; His direction was, that they should not exact, vers. 13. and to the Souldiers, asking the same question, he answers, Do violence to no man, vers. 14. These were the sins of their particular Professions, which were to be quitted, before any thing could be done higher. We have ordinarily more power over our actions, than our habits, and therefore we should begin here, and resolve deeply, by divine help, to cut off those supplies that feed vicious inclinations; for wicked habits are maintain'd by actions of Wickedness; when they cease, the inclinations grow more faint, and weak: and when we are come but thus far, to have confined our lusts, we shall be encouraged to proceed to destroy them. 'Tis said, There is no great distance between a Princes Prison and his Grave; The saying is most true in the case of Tyrants

Tyrants and Usurpers; and the habits of sin are both; when they are restrain'd, they are not far from being destroyed, if we imploy our endeavours, and the divine aids, as we ought.

This then must be done *First*, and the other part of the advice must be taken with it, viz. we must practise the outward actions of the contrary Vertues. We must do well, when we cease to do evil. When we turn from darkness, it must be to light, Acts 26. 18. Not from one kind of darkness to another. When we cease to oppress, we must be charitable; when we leave to tyrannize over our inferiours, we must be kind and helpful to them. When we forbear to slander, we must speak all the good we can of our Neighbour.

The outward actions of Vertue are in our power; and 'tis somewhat to come so far as this: What is more, viz. The inward love and delight in goodness, will succeed in time, if we persevere. 'Tis not safe for us to propose to our selves the greatest heights at first; if we do, we are discouraged, and fall back. God accepts even of that little, if it be in order to more. He despiseth not the day of small things, Zech. 4. 10. If thou dost well, shalt thou not be accepted? Christ loved the young man who had kept the external part of the Commandments, Mark 10. 12. If he had had the courage to have proceeded; what he had done, would have



steaded him much. The inward love of *Vertue* and *Holiness* is promoted by the outward exercises of them; and hereby the contrary evils are both pined and thrust out.

Thus of the *First* thing that *Endeavour* implies; upon this must follow,

(2.) *An attempt upon evil habits*, viz. Those that have been super-induced on us by *Carelessness* and *Temptation*, bad *Customs* and evil *Company*. Every *victory* is a means to another; we grow stronger, and the enemy weaker by it. To have overcome the outward acts of sin, is a beginning in our spiritual warfare; but our chief enemies are the habits; these must be attempted also, but with *Prudence*; wild *Beasts* are not to be dealt with by main strength; Art and Stratagem must be used in this War; and 'tis good policy, I think here, to fight the least powerful foes first, the contracted habits, before we fall on the inbred natural Inclinations. While our forces are weak, 'tis dangerous setting upon the strongest holds, viz. the vices of *Complexion*, which are woven into our very *Natures*. If a man apply all his force where he hath not resolution enough to go through with what he undertakes, he receives a foyl, and 'tis odds but he sits down and faints. *Prudence* therefore is to be used, where we distrust our strength: Fall upon *Sin*, where 'tis weakest, where it hath  
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least of Nature, and least of Temptation; and where we have arguments from Reputation and worldly Interests wherewith to war against it. If we prevail, we are heartned by the success: Our Faith and Resolution will grow stronger by this experience, when we have triumph't over the sins of evil Custom, Example, and sensual Indulgence.

And when that is done, we must remember that 'tis not enough that those habits are thrust out; others must be planted in their room: when the soyl is prepared, the seed must be sown, and the seeds of vertuous habits, are the actions of vertue. These I recommended under the last head, and shall say more of the introducing of habits, under one that follows on purpose.

(3.) The next advance in our endeavours, is, In the Strength of God, and in the Name of his Son, to assault the greater Devils, and to strive to cast out them; I mean the Sins of Complexion, and particular Nature. This is a great work, and will require strong Faith, and many Prayers, and much Time, and great Watchfulness, and invincible Resolution: Imploy these heartily; and though thou now and then mayst receive a foyle, yet give not off so, but rise again in the strength of God, implore new aid, and fortifie thy self with more considerations, and deeper resolves; and then renew the Combat upon the encouragement of Divine Assistance,



sistance, and *Christ's Merits and Intercession*, and the promise that sin shall not have dominion over us, Rom. 6. 14.

Remember, that *this* is the great work, and the biggest difficulty; if this be not overcome, all our other labour hath been in vain, and will be lost. If this root remain, it will still bear poysonous fruit, which will be matter for Temptation, and occasion of continual falling; and we shall be in danger of being reconciled again to our old sins, and to undo all; and so our latter end will be worse than our beginning, 2 Pet. 2. 20. Or, at least, though we stand at a stay, and satisfie our selves with that; yet though we are contented, our condition is not safe.

If we will endeavour to any purpose of duty, or security, we must proceed still after our lesser conquests, till the sins of Complexion are laid dead at our feet. He that is born of God, sinneth not, and he cannot sin, 1 Joh. 3. 9. Till we come to this, we are but struggling in the Birth.

Such a perfection as is mortifying of vitious temper, is I hope attainable, and 'tis no doubt that which Religion aims at; and though it be a difficult height, yet we must not sit down this side: At least we must be always pressing on to this Mark: if Providence cut off our days before we have arrived to it, we may expect acceptance of the

the *sincerity* of our endeavours, upon the account of the *merits* of our Saviour: For he hath procured favour for those *sincere* Believers and Endeavourers, whose Day is done before their work is compleated; *this* I mean, of subduing the *darling* sins of their *particular* Natures.

But then if we *rest*, and please our selves with the little *Victories* and Attainments, and let these our *great* Enemies quietly alone, 'tis an argument our *endeavours* are not *sincere*, but much short of that *striving*, which will procure an *entrance* into the *strait* Gate. The next thing (and 'tis the last I shall mention) which is implied in *striving*, is,

(4.) To furnish our selves, through Divine Grace, with the *Habits* and *Inclinations* of *Holiness* and *Vertue*. For *Goodness* to become a kind of *Nature* to the Soul, is an *height* indeed; but such a one as may be reacht: the new *Nature*, and New Creature, *Gal.* 6. 15. are not meer names.

We have observ'd that some men are of a *Natural* Generosity, *Veracity* and *Sweetness*; and they cannot act contrary to these *Native* Vertues, without a mighty *Violence*: why now should not the *New Nature* be as *powerful* as the *Old*? And why may not the *Spirit of God*, working by an active Faith and Endeavour, fix *Habits* and *Inclinations* on the Soul, as prevalent as *those*? No doubt, it may,



may, and doth, upon the Diviner Souls: For whom to do a *wicked*, or *unworthy Action*, 'twould be as *violent* and *unnatural*, as for the *meek* and *compassionate* temper to *butcher* the *innocent*; or for him, that is *naturally just*, to *oppress* and make a *prey* of the *Fatherless* and the *Widow*: I say, such a *degree* of *perfection* as this, should be aim'd at, *Heb. 6. 1.* and we should not slacken or intermit our endeavours till it be attain'd.

In order to it, we are to use frequent *meditation* on the *excellency* and *pleasure* of *Vertue* and *Religion*; and *earnest Prayer* for the *Grace* of *God*; and *diligent attendance* upon the *publick worship*; and *pious Company* and *Converses*: For this great *design*, these helps are requisite, and if we exercise our selves in them as we ought, they will *fire* our Souls with the *love* of *God* and *Goodness*; and so at last, *all Christian Vertues* will become as *natural* to us, as *sin* was before. And to one that is so *prepared*, the *Gate of Happiness* will be open, and of *easie* entrance; the *difficulties* are overcome, and from henceforth the way is *pleasant* and plain before him, *Prov. 3. 17.*

Thus I have shewn, that the *formidable difficulties* may be overcome, and *How*: 'tis a plain course I have directed, that will not puzzle mens *understandings* with *needleless niceties*, nor *distract* their *memories* with *multitudes*. Let us walk in this way,  
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and do it *constantly*, with *Agour* and *alacrity*; and there is no fear, but in the *Strength* of God, through the *merits* and *mediation* of his Son, we shall *overcome*, and at last *enter*.

I had now done with this *general Head*, but that 'tis necessary to note three things more.

(1.) Those *Instruments* of our Happiness which we must use in *striving*, viz. *Faith*, *Prayer*, and *active Endeavour*, must all of them be *employed*. Not any one singly, will do the great work; nor can the others, if any one be wanting. If we *believe*, and do not *pray*; or *pray*, and do not *endeavour*; or *endeavour*, without those, the *Difficulties* will remain, and 'twill be impossible for us to *enter*.

(2.) We must be *diligent* in our course: If we do not exercise *Faith* vigorously, and *pray* heartily, and *endeavour* with our whole might, the means will not succeed; and 'tis as good not at all, as not to purpose. The *Difficulties* will not be overcome by cold *Faith*, or *sleepy Prayers*, or *remiss Endeavours*: A very intense degree of these is necessary.

(3.) Our *striving* must be *constant*; we must not *begin*, and look back, Heb. 10. 38. or run a while, and stop in midd course, 1 Cor. 9. 24. and content our selves with some attainments, and think we have arrived, Phil. 3. 14. If we do so,

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we shall find our selves dangerously mistaken. The Crown is at the end of the Warfare, and the Prize at the end of the Race. If we will succeed, we must hold on: *The life of one that strives as he ought, must be a continual motion forwards; always proceeding, always growing.*

If we strive thus, we cannot fail; if any of these qualifications be wanting, we cannot but miscarry. And hence no doubt it is, that many that seek to enter, shall not be able, and the presumed sons of the Kingdom are shut out, *Mat. 8. 12.* They seek, and are very desirous to be admitted; They do some thing, and strive; but their striving is partial, or careless, or short; by reason of which defects, they do not overcome, and shall not enter.

This is a dangerous Rock, and perhaps there are as many undone by cold and half striving, as by not striving at all. He that hath done some thing, presumes he is secure; He goes the round of ordinary Duties, but advanceth nothing in his way; He overcometh none of the great Difficulties, none of the Habits or depraved Inclinations; He is contented with other things that make a more glorious shew; though they signifie less; and perhaps despiseth these, under the notion of Morality; and so presuming, that he is a Saint too soon, he never comes to be one at all: such are the Seekers that shall not be able to enter: Their seeking imports  
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some striving; but 'tis such, as, though it be specious, yet it is imperfect, and will not succeed. And hence the Third Proposition ariseth, that I proposed to discourse,

(III.) **T**hat there is a sort of Striving that will not procure an entrance: implied in these words, For many will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.

'Tis a dangerous thing to be flattered into a false peace; and to take up with imperfect Godliness; to reconcile the hopes of Heaven to our beloved sins, and to judge our condition safe upon insufficient grounds. This multitudes do, and 'tis the great danger of our days; Men cannot be contented without doing something in Religion; but they are contented with a little. And then they reckon themselves godly, before they are virtuous; and take themselves to be Saints, upon such things as will not distinguish a good man from a bad.

We seek after Marks of Godliness, and would be glad to know, how we might try our state: The thing is of great importance; and if the Signs we judge by are either false, or imperfect, we are deceived to our undoing. Meer Speculative mistakes about Opinions, do no great hurt: but error in the Marks and Measures of Religion is deadly. Now there are sundry things common-



ly taken for signs of Godliness; which though they are something, yet they are not enough; They are hopeful for beginnings, but nothing worth when they are our end and rest. They are a kind of seeking and imperfect striving; but not such as overcome the difficulties of the way, or will procure us an entrance at the Gate. Therefore to disable the flattering, insufficient Marks of Godliness, I shall discover in pursuance of the Third Proposition, *How far a man may strive in the exercises of Religion, and yet be found at last among those seekers that shall not be able to enter.* And though I have intimated something of this in the general before, yet I shall now more particularly shew it in the instances that follow. And in these I shall discover a Religion that may be called *Animal*, to which the natural man may attain.

( 1. ) *A Man may believe the Truths of the Gospel, and assent heartily to all the Articles of the Creed: and if he proceeds not, he is no further by this, than the faith of Devils, Jam. 2. 19.*

( 2. ) *He may go on, and have a great thirst to be more acquainted with Truth; he may seek it diligently in Scripture, and Sermons, and good Books, and knowing Company; And yet do this, by the motion of no higher Principle, than an inbred Curiosity, and desire of Knowledge; and many times this earnest=*

*earnestness after Truth, proceeds from a proud affectation to be wiser than our Neighbours, that we may pity their darkness; or the itch of a disputing humour, that we may out-talk them; or a design to carry on, or make a party, that we may be called Rabbi, or serve an Interest: and the zeal for Truth that is set on work by such motives, is a spark of that fire that is from beneath: 'Tis dangerous to a mans self, and to the publick Weal of the Church and mankind, but the man proceeds, and is,*

(3.) *Very much concern'd to defend and propagate his Faith; and the Pharisees were so in relation to theirs, Mat. 23. 15. and so have been many Professors of all the Religions that are, or ever were. Men naturally love their own Tenents, and are ambitious to mould others judgements according to theirs. There is glory in being an Instructor of other men; and turning them to our ways and opinions: So that here is nothing yet above Nature; nothing but what may be found in many that seek, and are shut out.*

(4.) *Faith works greater effects than these, and Men offer themselves to Martyrdom for it; This, one would think, should be the greatest height, and an argument that all the difficulties of the way, are overcome by one that is so resolved; and that the Gate cannot but be opened to him. And so, no doubt,*



doubt, it is, when all things else are sutable: But otherwise these consequences by no means follow. S. Paul supposeth that a man may give his Body to be burned, and not have Charity, without which his Martyrdom will not profit, 1 Cor. 13. For one to deny his Religion, or what he believes to be certain, and of greatest consequence, is dishonourable and base: and some out of principles of meer natural bravery, will die rather than they will do it; and yet, upon other accounts be far enough from being heroically vertuous. Besides, the desire of the glory of Martyrdom and Saintship after it, may in some be stronger than the terrours of Death: and we see frequently, that men will sacrifice their lives to their Honour and Reputation; yea to the most contemptible shadows of it. And there is no passion in us so weak, no lust so impotent, but hath, in many instances, prevail'd over the fear of dying. Every Appetite hath had its Martyrs; and all Religions theirs; and though a man give his Body to be burnt for the best, and have not Charity, viz. Prevalent love to God and Men, it will not signifie: So that Martyrdom is no infallible mark, nor will it avail any thing, except sincere endeavour to overcome the greater difficulties, have gone before it. Thus far Faith may go without effect: and yet one step further.

(5.) Men may confidently rely upon Christ for Salvation, and be firmly perswaded that he hath justified, and will make them happy. They may appropriate him to themselves, and be pleased mightily in the opinion of his being theirs. And yet notwithstanding this confidence may be in the number of those *seekers* that shall not enter. For Christ is the Author of *Eternal life*, only to those that obey him, Heb. 5. 9. and to obey him, is to strive vigorously and constantly, to overcome all our sinful Inclinations and Habits. And those that trust he will save them, though they have never seriously set about this work, deceive themselves by vain presumption, and in effect say, that he will dissolve or dispense with his Laws in their favour. For he requires us to deny our selves, Mar. 8. 34. To mortify the body, Rom. 8. 13. To love enemies, Mat. 5. 44. To be meek, Mat. 11. 29. and patient, Jam. 5. 8. and humble, 1 Pet. 5. 7. and just, Mat. 7. 12. and charitable, Heb. 13. 16. and holy, as he that called us is holy, 1 Pet. 1. 15. And he hath promised to save upon no other terms; For all these are included in Faith, when 'tis taken in the justifying sense; and this is the Way of Happiness and Salvation: If we walk not in this, but in the paths of our own choosing, our relying upon Christ is a mockery, and will deceive us.

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We may indeed be *confident*, and we ought, that he will *save* all those that *so believe* as to obey him; but may not trust that he will save us except we are some of those. To rely upon Christ for our Salvation, must follow our sincere and obedient striving, and not go before it. The mistake of this is exceeding dangerous, and I doubt hath been fatal to many. The sum is, to rely on Christ, without a resolute and steady endeavour to overcome every sin and temptation, will gain us nothing in the end but shame and disappointment: For 'tis not every one that saith unto him, Lord, Lord, shall enter into Heaven, but he that doth the will of his Father which is in Heaven, Mat. 7. 21. The foolish Virgins relied upon him, and expected he should open to them; Lord, Lord, open to us, Mat. 25. 11. but he kept them out, and would not know them, v. 11.

Thus of the First imperfect Mark of Godliness; A man may upon the account of meer Nature, arrive to all the mentioned degrees of Faith; and yet, if his endeavours in the practice of Christian vertues be not suitable, he will certainly come short at last.

(II.) A man may be very devout, given much to Prayer, and be very frequent and earnest in it; He may have the gift of expressing himself fluently, without the help of Form or Meditation; yea, and so intent and taken up in these exercises, that he

he may as it were be ravish't out of himself by the *fervours* of his Spirit; so that he really kindles very *high Affections* as well in others, as in himself: And yet if he *rests* in *this*, and such like things, as *Religion*, and reckons that he is accepted of God for it; if he allow himself in any *unmortified* lusts, and thinks to *compound* for them by his *Prayers*, he is an *evil man* notwithstanding, and one of those *seekers* that shall not be able to enter. The *Pharisees*, we know, were much given to *Prayer*: They were long in those *Devotions*, and very earnest in them, often repeating the same expressions out of vehemence. *Ignatius Loyola*, founder of the *Jesuites*, was a man almost *ecstasical* in his *Prayers*; and *Hacket* the *Blasphemer*, executed in the days of *Queen Elizabeth*, was a person of *Seraphical Devotion*, and would pray those that heard him even into *transports*. *Basilides* the cruel Duke of *Mosco*, is said to have his hands almost continually lifted up in *Prayer*, except when they were imployed in some barbarous and bloody *Execution*: And we have known and felt one not much unlike him. There are infinite instances in our days of this *dangerous* sort of *evil men*.

And we may learn hence, that the greatest gift of *Prayer*, and *earnestness* and *frequency* in it, is no good mark of *Godliness*, except it be attended

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with sincere, constant and vertuous endeavours.

For some men have a natural spice of Devotion in a Religious Melancholy, which is their temper; and such have commonly strong Imaginations and zealous affections, which when they are heated, flame forth into great heights and expressions of Devotion: The warm Fancy furnisheth words and matter readily and unexpectedly, which many times begets in the man a conceit that he is inspired, and that his Prayers are the breathings of the Holy Ghost; or at least, that he is extraordinarily assisted by it; which belief kindles his affections yet more, and he is carried beyond himself, even into the third Heavens, and Suburbs of Glory, as he fancies, and so he makes no doubt, but that he is a Saint of the first rank, and special favourite of Heaven; when all this while, he may be really a bad man full of Envy and Malice; Pride and Covetousness; Scorn and ill Nature; contempt of his Betters, and disobedience to his Governours: And while it is so, notwithstanding those glorious things, he is no further than the Pharisee. Hearty and humble desire, though imperfectly exprest, and without this pomp, and those wonders, is far more acceptable to God, who delights not in the exercises of meer Nature, Psal. 147. 10. but is well pleased with the expressions of Grace in those that fear him.

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So that a *sincere* and *lowly-minded* Christian that talks of no *immediate* incomes, or *communications*; and perhaps durst not, out of *reverence*, trust to his own present conceptions in a work so *solemn*, but useth the help of some *pious form* of words futable to his *desires* and *wants*, who is duly *sensible* of his *sins*, and the necessity of *overcoming* them; and is *truly* and *earnestly* desirous of the Divine aids, in order to it: such a one as *this* prays by the Spirit, and will be assisted by it; while the *other* doth all by *meer Nature* and *Imitation*, and shall not have those *spiritual* aids which he never *heartily* desires nor intends to use.

This, I think, I may *truly* and *safely* say: But for the Controversie between *Forms* and *Conceived Prayers*, which of them is *absolutely best*, I determine nothing of it here. And indeed I suppose that in their own nature, they are alike indifferent, and are more or less accepted, as they partake more or less of the *Spirit of Prayer*, viz. of *Faith*, *Humility* and *holy desire* of the good things we pray for; and a man may *have these* that prays by a *Form*; and he may *want* them that takes the *other* way, and thinks himself in a dispensation much above it. So that my business is not to set up one of these ways of Devotion against the other, but to shew, that the *heights* and *vehementcies* of many *warm* people in their *unpremeditated*



Prayers, have nothing in them *supernatural* or *Divine*; and consequently, of themselves, they are no marks of *Godliness*: which I hope no one thinks I speak to discredit those *pious* ardours that are felt by really devout Souls, when a *vigorous* sense of God, and *Divine* things, doth even sometimes transport them; Far be it from me to design any thing so *impious*; my aim is only to note, that there are *complexional* heats raised many times by *fancy* and *self-admiration*, that look like these, in persons who really have little of God in them; and we should take care that we are not deceived by them. Thus far also those may go that shall not enter. I add,

(III.) *A man may endeavour somewhat, and strive in some degree, and yet his work may miscarry, and himself with it.*

(1.) There is no doubt, but that an evil man may be convinced of his *sin* and *vileness*, and that even to *anguish* and *torment*. The *Gentiles*, saith the Apostle, *Rom. 2. 14.* which have not the Law, shew the works of the Law written in their Hearts, their thoughts in the mean time accusing, or excusing one another. Conscience often stings and disquiets the vilest sinners; and sometimes extorts from them *lamentable* confessions of their sins, and *earnest* declamations against them. They may weep bitterly at their remembrance, and  
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be under great heaviness and dejection upon their occasion. They may *speake vehemently* against sin themselves, and love to have others to handle it severely. All this bad men may do upon the score of *natural fear* and *self-love*, and the apprehension of a *future judgement*. And now such *convictions* will naturally beget some *endeavours*: A *convinced understanding* will have some influence upon the *will* and *affections*. The *mind* in the *unregenerate*, may lust against the *Flesh*, as that doth against it.

So that (2.) such a meer *animal man* may *promise*, and *purpose*, and *endeavour* in some considerable measure; but then, he goes not on with *full Resolution*, but *wavers* and *stops*, and *turns about* again; and lets the *law* of the *members*, that of *death* and *sin*, to prevail over him. His *endeavour* is *remiss*, and consequently *ineffectual*; it makes no *conquests*, and will not *signifie*. He *sins on*, though with *some regret*; and his very *unwillingness* to sin, while he commits it, is so far from *lessening*, that it *aggravates* his *fault*: It argues that he sins against *conscience* and *conviction*; and that *sin* is strong and reigns.

'Tis true indeed, St. Paul, Rom. 7. makes such a description seemingly of *himself*, as one might think concluded him under this state; he saith vers. 8. That *sin wrought in him all manner of concupiscence*: vers. 9. That *sin revived, and he died*: vers. 14.

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That he was carnal ; and again, sold under sin : vers. 20. That sin dwelt in him, and wrought that which he would not : vers. 23. That the Law of his members led him into captivity to the law of Sin : and vers. 25. That he obeyed the law of sin.

If this be so, and St. Paul, a regenerate man, was in this state, it will follow, that seeking and feeble endeavour, that overcometh no difficulty, may yet procure an entrance, and he that is come hitherto, viz. to endeavour, is safe enough though he do not conquer.

This objection presseth not only against this head, but against my whole Discourse, and the Text it self. Therefore to answer it, I say, That the St. Paul here is not to be understood of himself ; He describes the state of a convinced, but unregenerate man, though he speaks in the first person ; a Figure that was ordinary with this Apostle, and frequent enough in common speech : Thus we say, I am thus, and thus, and did so, and so, when we are describing a state, or actions in which perhaps we, in person, are not concerned.

In this sense the best Expositors understand these expressions, and those excellent Divines of our own, Bishop Taylor, and Dr. Hammond, and others have noted to us, That this description is directly contrary to all the Characters of a regenerate man, given elsewhere by this, and the other

other Apostles. As he is said to be dead to sin, Rom. 6. 11. Free from sin, and the servant of Righteousness, Rom. 6. 18. That he walks not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit, Rom. 8. 1. That the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, hath made him free from the Law of sin and death, Rom. 8. 2. That he overcometh the world, Joh. 5. 4. He sinneth not, 1 Joh. 3. 6. He hath crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts, Gal. 5. 24. Which Characters of a truly regenerate person, if they be compared with those above-cited out of Rom. 7. it will appear, that they are as contrary, as 'tis possible to speak, and by this 'tis evident that they describe the two contrary states.

For can the regenerate be full of all manner of concupiscence, and at the same time be crucified to the Flesh, and its affections and lusts? one in whom sin revives while he dies; and yet one that is dead to sin? carnal, and yet not walking after the flesh, but after the Spirit? sold under sin, and yet free from sin? Having sin dwelling in him; and a captive to sin; and obeying the Law of sin; and yet free from the law of sin and death? how can these things consist? To tell us, 'Tis so, and 'tis not so, and to twist such contradictions into Orthodox Paradoxes, are pretty things to please Fools and Children; but wise men care not for riddles that are not sense. For my part I think it clear, that the Apostle in that mistaken Chapter, relates



relates the feeble, impotent condition of one that was convinced and strove a little, but not to purpose. And if we find our selves comprised under that description, though we may be never so sensible of the evil and danger of a sinful course, and may endeavour some small matter, but without success, we are yet under that evil, and obnoxious to that danger: For he that strives in earnest, conquers at last, and advanceth still, though all the work be not done at once. So that if we endeavour and gain nothing, our endeavour is peccant, and wants Faith or Prayer for Divine aids, or constancy, or vigour; and so, Though we may seek, we shall not be able to enter.

But (3.) an imperfect Striver may overcome sin in some Instances, and yet in that do no great matter neither, if he lies down, and goes no further: There are some sins we outgrow by age, or are indisposed to them by bodily infirmity, or diverted by occasions, and it may be by other sins; and some are contrary to worldly Interests, to our credit, or health, or profit; and when we have in any great degree been hurt by them in these, we fall out with those sins, and cease from them, and so by resolution and disuse, we master them at last fully: which, if we went on, and attempted upon all the rest, were something: But when we stop short in these petty victories, our general state is not altered; He that conquers some evil appetites, is yet

yet a slave to others, and though he hath prevailed over some difficulties, yet the main ones are yet behind.

Thus the imperfect Striver masters, it may be, his beastly appetite to intemperate drinking, but is yet under the power of Love and Riches, and vain Pleasure. He ceaseth from open debauchery, but entertains spiritual wickedness in his heart: He will not Swear, but will backbite and rail: He will not be Drunk, but will damn a man for not being of his opinion: He will not prophane the Sabbath, but will defraud his Neighbour.

Now these half conquests, when we rest in them, are as good as none at all. Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have regard to all thy Commandments, saith the Kingly Prophet, Psal. 119. 6. 'Tis shameful to give off, when our work is but half done; what we do, casts the greater reproach upon us for what we omit. To cease to be prophane, is something as a passage, but nothing for an end. We are not Saints as soon as we are civil. 'Tis not only gross sins that are to be overcome: The wages of sin is death, not only of the great and capital, but of the smallest, if they are indulged. The Pharisee applauded himself, that he was not like the Extortioners, Adulterers and Unjust, nor like the Publican, that came to pray with him, Luk. 18. 11. and yet he went away never the more

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justified. The unwise Virgins were no profligate Livers, and yet they were shut out.

He that will enter, must strive against every corrupt appetite and inclination. A *less* leak will sink a Ship, as well as a *greater*, if no care be taken of it. A *Consumption* will kill, as well as the *Plague*; yea sometimes the *less* Disease may in the event prove more deadly, than the *greater*; for small distempers may be neglected, till they become incurable; whenas the *great* ones awaken us to speedy care for a remedy. A *small* hurt in the finger slighted, may prove a *Gangreen*, when a *great* wound in the *Head* by seasonable applications is cured.

'Tis unsafe then to content our selves with *this*, that our sins are not *foul* and *great*; *those* we account *little ones*, may prove as *fatal*, yea, they are sometimes more *dangerous*: For we are apt to think them *none at all*, or *Venial infirmities* that may consist with a *state of Grace*, and *Divine favour*: we *excuse* and make *Apologies* for them; and fancy that *Hearing*, and *Prayer*, and *Confession* are atonements enough for *these*. Upon which accounts I am apt to believe, that the *less* notorious Vices have ruined as many as the *greatest* Abominations. Hell doth not consist only of *Drunkards*, and *Swearers*, and *Sabbath-breakers*: No, the *demure Pharisee*, the *plausible Hypocrite*, and *formal Professor*,

for, have their place also in *that lake of fire*. The great impieties do often *startle and awaken* conscience, and beget strong convictions, and so sometimes excite resolution and vigorous striving; while men hug themselves in their *lesser sins*, and carry them unrepented of to their Graves.

The sum is, we may overcome some sins, and turn from the grosser sorts of wickedness, and yet if we endeavour not to subdue the rest, we are still in the condition of *unregeneracy and death*, and though we thus seek, we shall not enter.

(4.) A man may perform many duties of Religion, and that with relish and delight, and yet miscarry. As,

(1.) He may be earnest and swift to hear, and follow Sermons constantly from one place to another, and be exceedingly pleased and affected with the Word, and yet be an evil Man, and in a bad state. Herod heard John Baptist gladly, Mark 6. 20. and he that received the seed into stony places, received it joyfully, Mat. 13. 20. Zeal for hearing doth not always arise from a conscientious desire to learn in order to practice, but sometimes it proceeds from an itch after novelty and notions, or an ambition to be famed for Godliness; or the importunity of natural conscience, that will not be satisfied except we do something; or a desire to get matter to feed our opinions, or to furnish us with



pious discourse? I say, earnestness to hear, ariseth very often from some of these; and when it doth so, we gain but little by it: yea, we are dangerously tempted to take this for an infallible token of our Saintship, and so to content our selves with this Religion of the Ear, and to disturb every body with the abundance of our disputes and talk, while we neglect our own Spirits, and let our unmortified affections and inclinations rest in quiet, under the shadow of these specious services.

So that when a great affection to hearing seizeth upon an evil man, 'tis odds but it doth him hurt; it puffs him up in the conceit of his Godliness, and makes him pragmatical, troublesome and censorious; He turns his food into poison: Among bad men, those are certainly the worst, that have an opinion of their being godly; and such are those that have itching ears, under the power of vicious habits and inclinations. Thus an earnest diligent hearer, may be one of those who seeks, and is shut out. And so may

( 2. ) He that Fasts much, and severely: The Jews were exceedingly given to fasting, and they were very severe in it. They abstained from all things pleasant to them, and put on sackcloth, and sower looks, and mourned bitterly, and hung down the head, and sate in ashes; so that one might have taken these for very holy, penitent, mortified people that had a great antipathy

pathy against their sins, and abhorrence of themselves for them : And yet God complains of these strict severe Fasters, Zach. 7. 5. That they did not Fast unto him ; but fasted for strife and debate, Isa. 58. 4. Their Fasts were not such as he had chosen, to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burden, and to let the oppressed free, vers. 6. But they continued, notwithstanding their Fasts, and God's admonitions by his Prophets, to oppress the Widow, and Fatherless, and Poor, Zach. 7. 10.

Thus meer natural and evil men sometimes put on the garb of Mortification, and exercise rigors upon their Bodies and external persons, in exchange for the indulgences they allow their beloved appetites ; and while the strict Discipline reacheth no further, though we keep days, and Fast often, yet this will not put us beyond the condition of the Pharisee, who fasted twice in the week, as himself boasted, Luke 18. 12. And,

( 3. ) An imperfect striver may be very much given to pious and religious discourses : He may love to be talking of Divine things ; especially of the love of Christ to sinners, which he may frequently speak of with much earnestness and affection, and have that dear name always at his tongues end to begin and close all his sayings ; and to fill up the void places, when he wants what to say next ; and yet this may be a bad man, who never felt those  
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Divine things he talks of ; and never loved *Christ* heartily as he ought.

'Twas observed before, that there are some who have a sort of *Devoutness*, and *Religion* in their particular *Complexion* ; and if such are talkative ( as many times they are ) they will easily run into such discourses, as agree with their temper, and take pleasure in them for that reason ; As also for this, because they are apt to gain us reverence, and the good opinion of those with whom we converse. And such as are by nature disposed for this faculty, may easily get it by imitation and remembrance of the devout forms they hear and read : so that there may be nothing Divine in all this ; nothing but what may consist with *unmortified* lusts and affections : And though such talk earnestly of the love of *Christ*, and express a mighty love to his name, yet this may be without any real conformity unto him in his *Life* and *Laws*. The Jews spake much of *Moses* ; in him they believed, and in him they trusted, John 5. 45. His name was a sweet sound to their ears, and 'twas very pleasant upon their Tongues ; and yet they hated the Spirit of *Moses*, and had no love to those *Laws* of his which condemned their wicked actions. And we may see how many of those love *Christ*, that speak often and affectionately of him, by observing how they

they keep his Commandments, John 14. 15. especially those of Meekness, Mercy, and universal Love.

Thus imperfect Strivers may imploy themselves in the external offices of Religion: I have instanced only in Three, the like may be said of the rest. And to this, I add,

(I V.) That they may not only exercise themselves in the outward matters of duty, but may arrive to some things that are accounted greater heights, and are really more spiritual, and refined. To instance.

(I.) They may have some love to God, Goodness, and good Men. The Soul naturally loves Beauty and Perfection; and all mankind apprehend God, to be of all Beings, the most beautiful and perfect; and therefore must needs have an intellectual love for him: The reason that that love takes no hold of the passions in wicked men, is, partly because they are diverted from the thoughts of Him, by the objects of Sense; but chiefly, because they consider him as their enemy, and therefore can have no complacency or delight in him, who they think hath nothing but thoughts of enmity, and displeasure against them. But if once they come to be perswaded (as many times, by such false marks, as I have recited, they are) that God is their Father, and peculiar Friend; that they are his



his chosen, and his darlings, whom he loved from Eternity, and to whom he hath given his Son and his Spirit, and will give *Himself*, in a way of the fullest enjoyment; Then the Love that before was only an esteem in the understanding, doth kindle in the affections by the help of the conceit of Gods loving them so dearly, and the passion thus heated, runs out, even into *seraphick*, and *rapturous Devotions*; while yet all this, is but meer animal love, excited chiefly, by the love of our selves, not of the Divine Perfections. And it commonly goes no further, than to earnest expressions of extraordinary love to God in our Prayers and Discourses, while it appears not in any singular obedience to his Laws, or generous and universal love to mankind: which are the ways whereby the true Divine Love is exprest: for, This is the love of God, that we keep his Commandments, saith the Apostle, 1 Job. 5. 3. And as to the other, thus, If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us, 1 Joh. 4. 12. And on the contrary, If a man say I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar, John 4. 20. Charity then and universal obedience are the true arguments and expressions of our love to God; and these suppose a victory over corrupt inclinations and self-will. But the other love which ariseth from the conceit of our special dearness to God upon insufficient grounds; that goes no further than to  
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some *suavities*, and *pleasant fancies* within our selves; and some *passionate complements* of the *Image* we have set up in our *imaginations*. This Love will consist with *Hatred* and *contempt* of all that are not like our selves; yea, and it will produce it: those *poysonous fruits*, and *vile affections* may be encouraged, and cherish'd under it. So that there may be *some love to God* in *evil men*: But while *self-love* is the *only motive*, and the more *prevalent passion*, it signifieth nothing to their advantage.

And as the *imperfect striver* may have some love to *God*, so he may to *piety* and *vertue*: every man loves these in *Idea*. The vilest sinner takes part in his *affections* with the *vertuous* and *religious*, when he seeth them described in *History* or *Romance*; and hath a detestation for *those*, who are character'd as *impious* and *immoral*. *Vertue* is a great *Beauty*, and the mind is taken with it, while 'tis consider'd at a distance; and our corrupt *interests*, and *sensual affections* are not concern'd. 'Tis These that recommend *sin* to our love, and choice, while the *mind* stands on the side of *vertue*: with that we serve the *Law of God*, but with the *flesh* the *Law of Sin*, Rom. 7. 25. So that most wicked men, that are not degenerated into meer Brutes, have this *mental* and *intellectual* love to *goodness*: That is, they approve, and like it in their minds,  
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and would practise it also, were it not for the prevalent bias of flesh and sense.

And hence it will follow likewise, That the same may approve and respect good men; They may reverence and love them for their Charity, Humility, Justice and Temperance, though themselves are persons of the contrary Character; yea, they may have a great and ardent affection for those that are eminently pious and devout, though they are very irreligious themselves. The conscience of virtue, and of the excellency of Religion, may produce this in the meer natural man, who is under the dominion of vile inclinations and affections; and therefore, neither is this a good mark of godliness. Our love to God and goodness will not stead us, except it be prevalent. And as the love described, may be natural, and a meer animal man may arrive unto it: So,

( 2. ) He may to an extraordinary zeal for the same things that are the objects of his love. Hot tempers are eager, where they take either kindness or displeasure. The natural man that hath an animal love to Religion, may be violent in speaking, and acting for things appertaining to it. If his temper be devotional and passionate, he becomes a mighty zealot, and fills all places with the fame of his godliness: His natural fire moves this way, and makes a mighty blaze. Ahab was very zealous, and  
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'tis like 'twas not only his own interest that made him so, *2 Kings 10. 16.* The Pharisees were zealous people, and certainly their zeal was not always personated, and put on, but real; though they were Hypocrites, yet they were such, as in many things deceived themselves, as well as others. They were zealous for their Traditions, and they believ'd 'twas their duty to be so. St. Paul while a persecutor, was zealous against the Disciples, and he thought he ought to do many things against that name. And our Saviour foretells, that those zealous Murderers that should kill his Saints, should think, *They did God good service in it, John 16. 2.* So that all the zeal of the natural man is not feigning, and acting of a part; nor hath it always evil objects. The Pharisees were zealous against the wickedness of the Publicans and Sinners. Zeal, and that in earnest, and for Religion may be in bad men. But then, this is to be noted, that 'tis commonly about opinions or external rites, and usages, and such matters as appertain to first Table Duties, while usually the same men are very cold, in reference to the Duties of the Second: And when Zeal is partial, and spent about the little things that tend not to the overcoming the difficulties of our way, or the perfecting of humane nature, 'tis a meer animal fervour, and no Divine Fire. And the natural man, the Seeker that shall not enter, may grow up



to another height that looks gloriously, and seems to speak mighty things. As,

(3.) *He may have great comforts in religious meditations, and that even to rapturous excesses. He may take these, for sweet Communion with God, and the joys of the Holy Ghost, and the earnest of Glory, and be lifted up on high by them, and enabled to speak in wonderful ravishing strains; and yet notwithstanding be an evil man, and in the state of such as shall be shut out.*

For this we may observe, That those whose complexion inclines them to devotion, are commonly much under the power of melancholy; and they that are so, are mostly very various in their tempers; sometimes merry, and pleasant to excess; and then plung'd as deep into the other extream of sadness and dejection; one while the sweet humours enliven the imagination, and present it with all things that are pleasant and agreeable; And then, the black blood succeeds, which begets clouds and darkness, and fills the fancy with things frightful and uncomfortable: And there are very few but feel such varieties, in a degree, in themselves. Now while the sweet Blood and Humours prevail, the person whose complexion inclines him to Religion, and who hath arrived to the degrees newly discours'd of (though a meer natural man) is full of inward delight, and satisfaction; and fan-  
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cies at this turn, that he is much in the *favour* of God, and a sure *Heir* of the *Kingdom* of Glory; which must needs excite in him many *luscious*, and *pleasant* thoughts: and these further warm his *imagination*, which, by *new*, and *taking* suggestions still raiseth the *affections* more; and so the man is as it were *transported* beyond himself; and speaks like one *dropt* from the *Clouds*: His tongue flows with *Light*, and *Glories*, and *Communion*, and *Revelations*, and *Incomes*; and then, believes that the *Holy Ghost* is the *Author* of all this, and that God is in him of a *Truth*, in a special way of *Manifestation* and *Vouchsafement*. But when *melancholick* vapours prevail again; the *Imagination* is *overcast*, and the *Fancy* possess'd by *dismal* and *uncomfortable* thoughts; and the man, whose head was but just before among the *Clouds*, is now *groveling* in the *Dust*: He thinks *all* is lost, and his condition *miserable*; He is a *cast-away*, and *undone*; when in the mean while, as to *Divine* favour, he is just where he was before, or rather in a *better* state, since 'tis *better* to be *humbled* with reason, than to be *lifted up* without it. Such effects as these do meer *natural* passions and *imagination*s produce, when they are *tinctured* and *heightned* by *religious melancholy*. To deny ones self, and to overcome ones passions, and to live in a course of a *sober* *Vertue*, is much more *Divine* than all this.

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'Tis true indeed, and I am far from denying it, that holy men feel those joys and *communications* of the *Divine Spirit* which are no *fancies*; and the Scripture calls them *great peace*, Psal. 119. 165. and *joy in believing*, Rom. 15. 13. and the *peace of God that passeth all understanding*, Phil. 4. 7. But then, these *Divine Vouchsafements* are not *rapturous*, or *ecstatical*: They are no *sudden flashes* that are gone in a moment, leaving the Soul in the regions of sorrow, and despair; but *sober lasting comforts*, that are the *rewards* and *results* of *vertue*; the *rejoycings* of a good *Conscience*, 2 Cor. 1. 12. and the *manifestations* of God to those rare souls, who have overcome the *evils* of their *natures*, and the *difficulties* of the *way*, or are *rigorously pressing on* towards the *mark*, Phil. 3. 14. But for such as have only the *forms* of *Godliness* I have mentioned, while the *evil inclinations* and *habits* are indulged, (whatever they may pretend) all the *sweets* they talk of, are but the *imagery* of *dreams*, and the *pleasant delusions* of their *fancies*.

THUS I have shewn how far the *meer animal Religion* may go, in *imperfect striving*: And now I must expect to hear,

(1.) That this is very *severe*, *uncomfortable Doctrine*; and if one that shall eventually be *shut out*, may do *all this*, what shall become of the *generality*

generality of Religious men that never do so much ? And if all this be short, what will be available ? who then shall be saved ?

To which I Answer, That we are not to make the measures of Religion and Happiness our selves ; but to take those that Christ Jesus hath made for us : And he hath told us, That except our Righteousness exceed the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, we shall in no wise enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, Mat. 5. 20. Now the Scribes and Pharisees did things in the way of Religion, that were equal to all the particulars I have mentioned ; yea they went beyond many of our glorious Professors, who yet think themselves in an high form of Godliness. They believed their Religion firmly, and Prayed frequently and fervently, and Fasted severely ; They were exact, and exceeding strict in the observation of their Sabbaths, and hated scandalous and gross sins ; and were very punctual in all the duties of outward Worship ; and in many things supererogated and went beyond what was commanded : Such zealous people were They ; and They separated from the conversations and customs of other Jews, upon the account of their supposed greater Holiness and Purity. These were heights to which the Pharisees arrived ; and a good Christian must exceed all this : And he that lives in a sober course of Piety and Vertue ; of self Government, and humble submission to God ; of obedience



dience to his Superiors, and charity to his Neighbours: He doth really exceed it, and shall enter, when the other shall be shut out. So that, when our Saviour saith, that the Pharisaick Righteousness must be exceeded, the meaning is not, That a greater degree of every thing the Pharisees did, is necessary; but we must do that which in the nature and kind of it is better, and more acceptable to God, viz. That whereas they placed their Religion in strict Fastings, and nice observations of Festivals; in loud and earnest Prayers, and zeal to get Profelytes; we should place ours, in sincere subjection of our wills to the will of God; in imitation of the life of Christ, and obedience of his Laws; in amending the faults of our natures and lives: in subduing our Passions, and casting out the habits of evil: These are much beyond the Religion of the Fanatick Pharisee; not in shew and pomp; but in real worth, and divine esteem. So that, upon the whole, we have no reason to be discouraged, because They that do so much are cast out; since, though we find not those heats, and specious things in our selves which we observe in them, yet if we are more meek and modest, and patient, and charitable, and humble, and just, our case is better; and we have the Power of Godliness; when theirs is but the Form; And we, whom They accounted Aliens and Enemies, shall enter; while they, the presumed friends and domesticks, shall be shut out. But

But ( 2. ) I expect it should be again objected against this severity of Discourse, That our Saviour saith, *Mat. 11. 20. That his yoke is easie, and his burden is light* : which place seems to crosse all that hath been said about the Difficulties of Religion. And 'tis true it hath such an appearance, but 'tis no more ; For the words look as crosse to the expressions of the same Divine Author, concerning the straitness of the Gate, and narrowness of the Way, as to any thing I have delivered from those infallible sayings. Therefore to remove the semblance of contrariety, which the objected Text seems to have to those others, and to my Discourse, we may observe,

That when our Saviour saith, that his yoke is easie, the word we read is *εὐσθῆναι*, which signifieth very good, excellent, gracious ; and the meaning I suppose is, That his Precepts had a native beauty and goodness in them ; That they are congruous and futable to our reasonable Natures, and apt instruments to make us happy ; In which sense, this expression hath no antipathy to the Text, or to any thing I have said. And whereas 'tis added, [ *My Burden is light* ] I think by this we are to understand, That his Commands are not of that burdensome nature, that the Ceremonies of the Jewish Laws were : Those were very cumbersome, and had nothing in their nature to make them pleasant

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and agreeable; whereas his Religion had no expensive, troublesome Rites appendant to it; nor did it require any thing but our observation of those *Laws* which eternal Reason obligeth us to, and which of our selves we should choose to live under, were we freed from the *intanglements* of the *World*, and *interests* of *Flesh*. So that neither doth this *Objection* signifie any thing against the scope of my Discourse.

And now I come to *Apply* what I have said; and the things I have to add will be comprehended under these two Generals (1.) *Inferences*, and (2.) plain *Advice* in order to practice. I begin with the *Inferences* and *Corollaries* that arise from the whole Discourse. And,

(1.) We may collect, *What is the state of Nature*, and *What the state of Grace*. We have seen that 'tis the great business of Religion to overcome evil *Inclinations*, and the prevailing influence of *sense* and *passion*, and evil *customs* and *example* and worldly *affections*; And therefore the state of Nature consists in the power and prevalency of *These*. This is that the Scripture calls the *Old man*, Eph. 4. 22. *The Image of the earthy*, 1 Cor. 15. *Flesh*, Gal. 5. 17. *Death*, Rom. 7. 24. *Darkness*, Joh. 3. 19. and *old leaven*, 1 Cor. 5. 7. On the contrary, *The state of Grace* is a state of sincere striving against them;

them; which if it keeps on, ends in *Victory*. And this is call'd *Conversion*, Acts 3. 19. and *Renovation*, while 'tis in its first motions; And the *Divine Nature*, 2 Pet. 1. 4. the *Image of the Heavenly*, 1 Cor. 15. 20. The *Spirit*, Gal. 5. 16. *Light*, Ephes. 5. 8. and *Life*, 1 Joh. 3. 14. when 'tis arriv'd to more compleatness and perfection.

For our fuller understanding this, we may consider, That Grace is taken (1.) for *Divine favour*; (2.) for *Christian Vertue*. As it signifies *Divine favour*, so it is used,

(1.) For those *helps and aids* God affords us, viz. the *Gospel*, Joh. 1. 17. and the *influences of his Spirit*, 1 Cor. 12. 9. In this sense we are deliver'd from the *state of Nature* by *Baptism*, viz. We are intitled to *divine helps*, which is a kind of *regeneration*; for we are born in a condition of *impotence*, and *weakness*, and *destitution of spiritual assistances*; This is the *world of meer nature*; But then in *Baptism*, we are brought into the *world of the Spirit*, that is, are put under its *influences*, and are assured of its *aids*, and so are *morally born again*; Not that this *Regeneration* alone will *save us*, without our *endeavours*; it imports only an *external relation*, and right to *priviledges*, and by *these* we may be *powerfully assisted* in our *striving*, if we use them.



But then (2.) *Grace*, as it signifies *divine favour*, implies his *special* love and kindness, such as he vouchsafes to holy and vertuous men; so that we may observe that there may be a *distinction* between a *state* of *Grace*, and a *state* of *salvation*. A *state* of *Grace* in the former sense, is a *condition* assisted by the *influences* of *Gods Spirit*, and all baptized persons are in *that*. But if they use not those helps, they are not in *Gods special* favour; and so not in a *state* of *Salvation*. But when those *assistances* are duly imployed, and join'd with our *sincere endeavour*, then the person so using them, is in a *state* of *Salvation* also; and in *God's special* love and favour. Thus of the *state* of *Grace* in the first sense, as taken for *divine favour*.

(2.) The word is also used for *Christian Vertue*, 2 Pet. 3. 18. and *Vertue* is call'd *Grace*, because 'tis wrought in us by the *assistance* of *Gods Spirit* and the *light* of the *Gospel*, which are *divine favours*; and to be in a *state* of *grace* in this sense, is to be a *virtuous* man; which supposeth *divine* aids, and intitles to *divine* love.

These things I have taken an occasion thus briefly to state; because there is oft-times much confusion in mens discourses about *Grace* and *Nature*, from which much trouble and many controversies have arisen. And by what I have said also in these brief hints; the doctrine of our Church

Church in the office of *Baptism*, may be understood clearly, and will appear to be very sound and true, notwithstanding the petty exceptions of confident Dissenters.

(II.) I may infer, *That the great Design of Religion and the Gospel is to perfect humane nature.* The perfection of our natures, consists in the subjection and subordination of the affections and passions to the Mind, as it is enlightned, and directed by the divine Laws, and those of Reason. This is the state of integrity, in which we were first made; and we lost it by the rebellion of our senses and inferior powers, which have usurpt the government of us ever since. Here is the imperfection and corruption of our natures.

Now Religion designs to remove and cure these; and to restore us to our first, and happy state. Its business is not to reform our looks, and our language; or to model our actions, and gestures into a devout appearance; not only to restrain the practice of open prophaneness and villany; nor to comfort us with the assurance of Gods loving us we know not why: But to cure our ill natures, to govern our passions, to moderate our desires, to throw out pride and envy, and all uncharitable surmisals, with the other spiritual sorts of wickedness; and thereby to make us like unto God, in whom



whom there is no shadow of *sin*, or *imperfection*; and so to render us fit objects of his *delight*, and *love*.

So that whatever doth not tend to the making us, some way or other *really better*: *better* in our *selves*, and *better* in all *Relations*, as *fathers*, and *children*, and *husbands* and *wives*, and *subjects*, and *governours*, and *neighbours* and *friends*, is not *Religion*; It may be a *form* of *Godliness*, but 'tis nothing to the *life*, and *power*. And where we see not *this effect* of *Religion*, let the professor of it be never so *high* and *glorious* in his *profession*, we may yet conclude that either his *Religion* is not *good*, or that he only *pretends*, and *really* hath it not.

This I take to be a consideration of great moment and great certainty, *viz.* That *Christian Religion* aims at the *bettering* and *perfecting* of our *natures*. For the things it commands relate either to *worship* or *virtue*. The instances of *external worship* are *prayer*, and *praise*; both which are high acts of *gratitude* and *justice*, and they fit us for *divine blessings*, and keep us under a *sense* of *God*, and prepare us for *union* with him, which is the *highest perfection* of which the creature is capable. Thus the *outward* acts of *worship* tend to our *happiness*; and the *inward* do infinitely the *same*.

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These are, *Faith*, and *Love*, and *Fear*. *Faith* in God supports and relieves us in all afflictions, and distresses. The *love* of him is a pleasure and solace to us in all losses and disappointments, since he is an object most filling, and satisfying; and *one* that cannot be lost, except we wilfully thrust him from us. *Fear* of God hath no torment; 'Tis no slavish dread of his *greatness* and Power; but a reverence of his *perfections*, and a lothness to offend him; and this *disposeth* us also for the *communications* of his grace, and love, *Psal.* 85. 9. And this it doth by *congruity*, and its *own nature*; which is to be said likewise of the others. So that they would make those *happy* that practise them, whether they had been positively enjoyn'd, or not; And though no *express* rewards had been annex unto them.

There are other two acts of worship which Christianity requires, which are *instituted* and *positive*, and respect Christ our Lord; They are, the *Sacraments*; *Baptism*, and the *Lords Supper*; both which are *holy Rites* of high signification; and *seals* of an excellent *Covenant* between God and us, assuring us of pardon of sins, and all divine *favours*, upon the conditions of our *Faith*, and *repentance*; and more firmly obliging us to holy *obedience*, and *dependance*; The only way in which we can be happy. Whence we see briefly, that all the parts of  
worship.



worship which Christianity binds upon us, tend to our perfection and Felicity.

And all the *vertues* that it commands do the same; both those that respect us in a personal capacity, and those others that relate to us as *members* of *Societies*. Thus *humility*, recommended *Mat. 5. 3.* *Meekness* blest, *ver. 5.* *purity*, *ver. 8.* are *vertues* that accomplish our *particular* persons, and make us *happy* in our selves. For of *Pride* cometh *Contention*, *Prov. 13. 10.* And a great part of our troubles arise from stomach and self-will; which *humility* cures. *Meekness* also takes away the occasion of the numerous mischiefs we run into through the *rage* and disorder of our passions; and 'tis in it self a *great beauty* and ornament, since it ariseth from the *due order*, and *government* of our *faculties*. *Purity* which comprehends *temperance* of all sorts, frees us from the tormenting *importunity* of those desires that drag us out of our selves, and expose us to sin, and folly, and temptation, and make us exceeding miserable; besides which it is a perfection that renders us *like* unto God, and the blest *Spirits* of the highest rank. And *Christian vertues* do not only accomplish, and make us *happy* in our *particular* persons, but they do the same in our *publique* capacities; They dispose us to a *quiet* obedience to our *governours* without *murmuring*, and complaining; and there-  
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by the publique peace is secured; and all good things else in *that*.

But there are *other vertues* that Christianity enjoyns, which have a more direct tendency to the happiness of others, as *Justice*, Mat. 7. 12. *Charity*, 1 Cor. 13. *Loyalty*, Rom. 13. and all other *publique* vertues may, I think, be comprehended under *these*. Where there is no *Justice*, every man preys upon another, and no mans property is safe. Where *Charity* is wanting, Jealousies, hatreds, envying, back-bitings, and cruelties abound, which render the world deplorably unhappy. Where there is not *Loyalty* and *conscionable submission* to Governours, the *publick* is upon every occasion of commotion, involv'd in infinite miseries, and disasters. So that all the *precepts* of our Religion are in their own nature *proper instruments* to make *us happy*; and they had been *methods* of *Felicity* to be chosen by all reasonable creatures, though they had never been required by so great, and so sacred an Authority.

These things I have said, because I could not choose but take this occasion to recommend the *excellency*, and *reasonableness* of our Religion; And I have done it but only in brief hints, because it ariseth but upon a *Corollary* from my main subject, and from *this* I infer further,

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(III.) That



( III. ) *That Christianity is the height, and perfection of morality.* They both tend to the real bettering, and accomplishment of humane nature: But the rules and measures of moral Philosophy were weak and imperfect till Christ Jesus came; He confirmed and enforced all those precepts of virtue, that were written upon our hearts; and cleared them from many corruptions that were grown upon them, through ignorance and vice, the glosses of the Jews, and false conceits of the Gentiles; and he enforced them anew by his Authority and the knowledge he gave of divine aids, and greater rewards, and punishments, than were understood before; yea he enlarged them in some instances; such as, loving enemies and forgiving injuries. Thus Christ Jesus taught morality, viz. the way of living like men; And the 5th Chapter of Matthew is an excellent Lecture of this kind.

So that to disparage morality, is to disgrace Christianity it self; and to vilifie one of the ends of Christs coming into the world. For all Religion and all duties respect either God, our neighbour, or our selves; and the duties that relate to these two last, are acknowledg'd moral virtues. The Apostle St. James counted these Moralities of visiting the Widow and Fatherless, to be the pure Religion and unde-

undefiled, Jam. 1. 17. and the Prophet Micah intimates, that those *moral* vertues of *Justice* and *mercy* were some of the main things that God required of us, Micah 6. 8. Our Saviour saith that the whole *Law* is summ'd up in *these* two, to love God with *all* our souls, and our *neighbour* as our *selves*, Matth. 22. 13. which latter contains the duties of *morality*. And that which the *grace* of God in the Gospel teacheth, according to St. Paul is, to live *soberly*, *righteously*, and *godly* in *this* present world, Tit. 2. 11. There is no *godliness* without *morality*. All the *fruits* of the Spirit reckon'd up Gal. 5. 22. are *moral* vertues. And when we are commanded to *grow* in *grace*, 2 Pet. 3. 18. *vertue* is partly understood. For one branch of what is call'd *Grace* in us, is *moral* vertue, produced by *divine* aids, *Christian* principles, and *incouragements*; though 'tis true, the world is extended to those duties that relate immediately to God also.

By which we see how *ignorantly*, and *dangerously* those people talk, that disparage *morality* as a dull, lame thing of no account, or reckoning. Upon this the Religion of the second Table is by too many neglected; and the whole *mystery* of the *new* *Godliness* is lay'd in *frequent* bearing, and devout *seraphick* talk, *luscious* *fancies*, *new* *lights*, *incomes*, *manifestations*, *in-dwellings*, *sealings*, and such like. Thus *Antinomianism*, and all kinds of *Fanaticism* have



made their way by the disparagement of *morality*, and men have learnt to believe themselves the *chosen*, *pretious* people, while their *hearts* have been full of *malice*, and *bitterness*, and their hands of *violence*, while they *despised dominions*, and *spake evil of dignities*, *rebell'd against the Government*, *destroyed publique peace*, and endeavoured to bring *all* into *misery* and *confusions*. 'Tis this diabolical project of dividing *morality* from *Religion* that hath given rise and occasion to all *these villanies*. And while the Practisers of such things have assumed the name of the *only Godly*, *Godliness* it self hath been brought into *disgrace* by them; and *Atheism* encouraged to shew it self, in open *defiance* to *Religion*. Yea, through the *indiscretions*, and *inconsiderateness* of *some preachers*, the *fantastury*, and vain babble of *others*, and the general *disposition* of the people to *admire* what makes a great *shew*, and pretends to more than ordinary *spirituality*; things are, in many places, come to that pass, that those who teach *Christian vertue* and *Religion*, in *plainness* and *simplicity* without senseless *phrases*, and *fantastick affectations*, shall be reckon'd for *dry moralists*, and such as understand nothing of the *life*, and *power* of *Godliness*. Yea, those people have been so long used to *gibberish* and *canting*, that they cannot understand *plain sense*; and *vertue* is become such a stranger to their *ears*, that when they hear

hear it spoken of in a Pulpit, they count the preacher a broacher of *new divinity*; and one that would teach the way to heaven by *Philosophy*: And he escapes well, if they do not say, That he is an *Atheist*, or that he would reconcile us to *Gentilism*, and *Heathen Worship*. The danger and vanity of which ignorant humour, the contempt of morality, is apparent in the whole scope of my Discourse, and therefore I add no more concerning it here; but proceed to another Inference, which is,

( IV. ) *That Grace and the new nature, make their way by degrees on the Soul; for the difficulties will not be removed nor the corrupt nature subdued all at once. Habits that grow by repeated acts, time, and continuance, will not be expelled in a moment. No man can become greatly evil or good, on a sudden. The Path of the just shines more and more to a perfect day, Prov. 4. 18. We do not jump from darkness into full light. We are not fully sanctified and converted in an instant. The day begins in an insensible dawn, and the Kingdom of heaven is like a grain of Mustard seed, Mat. 13. 31. It doth not start up presently to the stature of a tree. The Divine birth begins like the Natural, in an imperfect embryo.*

There



There are some *seeds of Knowledge and Goodness* that God hath sown in our natures; *these* are excited by the *Divine Grace and Spirit* to *convictions*, which proceed to *purposes*; *these* to *resolutions*, and thence we pass to *abstinence from all gross sins*, and the *performance of outward Duties*; and so at last by degrees, to *vigorous attempts*, for the *destruction of evil habits and inclinations*. When *Grace* is arrived to this eminent growth, 'tis very visible, as the Plant is when 'tis above the ground: But the *beginnings of Conversion* are not ordinarily perceived.

So that to catechize men about the *punctual time*, and *circumstances of their Conversion*, is an idle device, and a great temptation to *vanity and lying*. Who can tell the exact moment when the *night ends*, and the *dawn enters*? 'Tis true indeed, the *passage from the excesses of Wickedness*, which begins in some extraordinary horrors and *convictions*, is sometimes very notable; but 'tis not so in *all*, or *most*. The time of *St. Paul's conversion* was eminent, but that change was from *great contrarieties and miraculous*, and therefore 'tis not to be drawn into instance. Both the *beginnings and minute progressions of Grace*, are usually undiscerned: We cannot see the *Grass* just putting out of the earth, or actually growing; but yet we find that it doth both. And *Grace* is better known in  
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its fruits, than in its rise. By their *Fruits* ye shall know them, saith our Saviour, Mat. 12. 33. and the same way we may know our selves.

( V. ) We see that there is an *Animal*, as well as a *Divine Religion*: A Religion that is but the effect and modification of complexion, natural fear and self-love. How far these will go, we have seen, and how short it will prove in the end. The not noting this hath been the sad occasion of deceiving many. Some observing great heats of zeal and devotion in the modern *Pharisees*, take these to be the *Saints* and good people; believing all the glorious things which they assume to themselves: When others, that know them to be *envious* and *malitious*, *unjust* and *covetous*, *proud* and *ungovernable*, and cannot therefore look on them as such choice holy people, are apt to affirm all to be *hypocrisie* and *feigning*. In which sentences, both are mistaken for want of knowing that there is a *meer Animal Religion*, that will produce very *specious* and *glorious* effects: So that though the *Pharisee* Prays vehemently, and Fasts severely, and talks much of the love of God, and delights greatly in hearing, and pious Discourse, and will suffer all things for what he calls his Conscience; yet he is not to be concluded a Saint from hence, because the *meer Animal Religion* may put it self forth in all these expressions.

And



And though this Professor be a bad man, proud and covetous, malicious and censorious, Sacrilegious and Rebellious, yet we cannot thence be assured that he is an Hypocrite, in one sense, viz. such an one as feigns all that he pretends: But we may believe that he is really so affected with Hearing and Praying, and devout Company, as he makes shew, and yet for all this, not alter our opinion of his being an evil man: since the Animal Religion will go as far as the things in which he glories.

There is nothing whereby the common people are drawn more easily into the ways of Sects and Separations, than by the observation of the zeal and devotion of those of the factions: These they take to be Religion, and the great matters of Godliness, and those the religious and only godly people. And so first they conceive a great opinion of them, and then follow them whithersoever they lead. For the generality of men are tempted into Schism and Parties, not so much by the arguments of dissenters, as by the opinion of their Godliness, which opinion is grounded upon things which may arise from the meer Animal Religion, and very commonly do so. This they understand not, and by this ignorance are betrayed into the snare of Separation, to the disturbance of the Peace of the Church, and their own great hurt and inconvenience. Whereas could they be made to know

know and consider, that *complexion* and *natural* passions may bring forth *all these fruits*, they might be secured by this means against the *tempting imposture*; and learn, that *Meekness* and *Patience*, *Affability* and *Charity*, *Justice*, and a *Peaceable*, *humble temper*, are better arguments of *Saintship* than all these. Thus a great *mischief* might be prevented; and there is *another* that might be remedied by the *same* Observation: The inconvenience is this,

While the enemies of *Factions* object *Hypocrisie* to them, affirming that all they *do* and *say*, is *meer personating* and *pretence*; they confirm and settle those people in their way; for many of them *know*, that they are in *earnest*, and consequently, that their opposers are mistaken in their judgements concerning them; by which they are better establisht in their own good opinion, and hardned against conviction; whereas, did they consider such things as I have suggested, about the *Animal Religion*, and grant to them that they may be *serious*, believe themselves infinitely, and feel all those Warmths which they pretend, and yet be *evil men*, and far enough from being *Godly*; Did they shew them, that all their *zeal* and *Devotion*, and more and greater than *theirs*, may arise from a principle that hath nothing *Divine* and *supernatural* in it: They would thereby strike them

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in the *right vein*, and bring them down from the high perch, whereon, by their *false marks*, they had placed themselves; and thereby disabuse them, and prevent the abuse of others.

(V I.) We see how we may know our state, whether it be that of *Grace and Life*; or the other sad one of *Unregeneracy and Death*. The state of *Grace* is a motion towards the recovery of the *Divine Image*, and a victory over our selves, and all corrupt inclinations and affections. The state of *Unregeneracy and Death*, is the continuance under the power and prevalency of *sense, passion, and evil habits*. Now when 'tis question'd by our selves in which of these states we are; it must be supposed that we are arrived at something of *Religion*: For the grossly wicked cannot but know what their condition is. And the way I would propose to those others, who are yet uncertain, is this, viz. To take notice,

Whether they really design, and make any progress in *Goodness*. Every motion indeed cannot be felt or perceived; but if we go on, though never so insensibly, time will shew that we are grown. If we consider what are our particular defects, and studiously apply proper instruments to remove them: if we find success in those indeavours, and that we are better this year than we were the former; That our *Passions* are better governed, and our inordinate

ordinate affections more restrained, and our evil habits and inclinations less powerful with us, 'tis an infallible sign, that we live and are in a state of Grace; that we shall at last arrive to a perfect man in Christ Jesus, Eph. 4. 13. and shall attain if we faint not, 2 Cor. 4. 1. Whereas on the other hand, if we come to some hopeful pitch, and stand still there; if sin and temptation be as powerful with us now, as they were a year ago, and our inclinations and passions just at the same pass; we are in a bad state, and dead. While the Plant grows, it lives, and may become a great tree, though at present it be but small: whereas that whose stature is bigger, and more promising, if it proceeds not, decays and comes to nothing.

Though we are imperfect, if we are striving and going towards perfection; God overlooks our Infirmities, and pardons them for Christ's sake. This is our sincerity, and an effect of true Faith. But if on the other hand, we think our selves well, and do not always attempt forwards, our state is bad, and our sins will be imputed: Be our pretences what they will, our Faith is not sincere, and will not stand us.

When we get to a certain pitch in Religion, and make that our state, 'tis an argument that our Religion was meerly Animal; and but a mode of complexion, self-love, and natural fear. When we overcome



some sins, and are willing to spare and cherish others, 'tis a sign that we are not *sincere* in our attempts upon any, and that what we have done, was not performed upon good and *divine* motives.

*Sincerity is discovered by growth*, and this is the surest mark that I know of *Trial*. So that we have no reason to *presume*, though, as we think, we have gone a great way, if we go not on. Nor on the other side, have we any to *despair*, though our present attainments are but *small*, if we are proceeding. The buds and tenderest blossoms of *Divine Grace*, are acceptable to God; when the fairest leaves of the *meer Animal Religion* are nothing in his esteem.

This is a great advantage we have from the Gospel, that *imperfection* will be accepted, where there is *sincerity*; whereas according to the measures of exact and rigorous Justice, no man could be made happy in the high degree of glory, but he that was perfect, and whose victories were absolute.

(VII.) It may be collected from our Discourse, *Wherein the Power of Godliness consists*, viz. *In a progress towards perfection, and an intire victory over all the evils of our Natures.* The Forms of *Godliness* are not only in the ceremonies of *Worship*, and external actions of *feigned Piety*; But all the fine things

things of the *Animal Religion* are of *this kind*; and they are the *worst sort*: By the *grosser Forms* men hardly deceive others; by *these* they effectually gull themselves. So that many that vehemently oppose *Forms*, are the greatest *Formalists*. *Forms of Worship* may well agree with the *Power of Godliness*; whenas zeal against *Forms*, may be a *Form* it self; whatever makes shew of Religion, and doth not make us better, that's a *Form*, at least to us. There are *Spiritual Forms*, as well as those of the other sort, and *these* are most deadly. Poyson is worst in *Aqua Vita*. He that speaks his Prayers *ex tempore* with vehemence and loudness, if he strive not against ill nature and self-will, is as much a *Formalist*, as he that tells his Prayers by his Beads, and understands not one word he saith. And those that run away from *Forms in Churches*, meet more dangerous ones in *Barns and private corners*. *Orthodox Opinions*, devout Phrases, set Looks, melting Tones, affected Sighs, and vehement Raptures, are often meer *Forms of Godliness*, that proceed from the *Animal Religion*, which it self is a *Form* likewise. O that the observers of so many notes in their Brethrens eyes, would learn to throw out the Beams of their own!

The *Form of Godliness* that pretends it self to be no more, is not so hurtful: But the *Forms*, that call themselves the *Power*, are deadly. 'Tis the  
Forma.



*Formality and Superstition of Separatists that keeps on the Separation: They contend for fancies and arbitrary trifles; We for order and obedience. The people are abused by names, and being frightened by the shadows of Superstition and Formality, they run into the worst Formality, and silliest Superstition in the World. The Kingdom of Heaven consists not in meats and drinks, Rom. 14. 17. neither in Circumcision, nor Uncircumcision, 1 Cor. 7. 19. not in zeal for little things, nor in zeal against them; both the one and the other are equally formal.*

*The power of Religion lies in using Divine aids heartily and constantly, in order to the overcoming the Difficulties of our way. This Godliness is not exercised so much in reforming others, as our selves: The chief design is to govern within, and not to make Laws for the World without us. This is that Wisdom that is from above, which is pure and peaceable, Jam. 3. 17. It makes no noise and bluster abroad, but quietly minds its own business at home.*

*So that certainly the best men have not always had the greatest fame for Godliness; as the wisest have very seldom been the most popular. They are the effects of the Animal Religion that make the biggest shew. The voice of true Religion is heard in quiet, it sounds not in the corners of the street. The power of Godliness is seen in Justice, Meekness, Humi-*

*Humility, and Charity, things that look not so splendidly as the Spiritual Forms.*

And thus of the *Inferences* and *Corollaries* that may be drawn from my Discourse, which though they cannot all be inferred from any of its minute and separated parts, yet they lie in the design and contexture of the whole.

**I** Come now to the *Advice for Practice*. The way of Happiness is difficult, but the difficulties may be overcome by striving. A little will not do; many seekers are shut out; what remains then, but that we persuade our selves to strive, and that diligently; with constant resolution and endeavour?

We were made for Happiness, and Happiness all the World seeks: *who will shew us any good?* Psal. 4. 6. is the voice of all the Creatures. We have sought it long in emptiness, and shadows; and that search hath still ended in shame and disappointment. Where true substantial Felicity is, we know, and the Way we know, Joh. 14. 4. It is not hid from us in Clouds and thick Darknes; or if it were, 'twere worth our pains to search after it. It is not at so great a distance, but it may be seen, yea, it may be brought so near as to be felt. Though the way is strait, yet 'tis certain; or if it were otherwise, who would not venture his pains upon the possibility of such



such an issue? *Many difficulties* are in it; but our *Encouragements* and *Assistances* are infinite. The love of God, and the gift of his son; the blood of Christ, and his intercession; the aids of the Spirit, and the directions of the Gospel; the *Invitations* and *Promises*, the rare *Precepts*, and incomparable *Examples* of those holy men that have gone before us: These are mighty helps and great motives to assist us in striving, and to quicken us to it.

Let us then arise in the strength of *Faith*, and in the encouragement of *those aids*, and attempt with courage upon the *Difficulties* of our way. Let us engage our *deepest Resolutions*, and most diligent endeavours. Here is no need to deliberate, the things are necessary, the benefits unspeakable, and the event will be glorious. It is no Question, I hope, whether God, or the Creature is to be first chosen; whether Heaven or Hell be better? and therefore there is no cause that we should stay and consider; we cannot be rash here, we cannot hurt our selves by a too sudden engagement; we have delayed too long already, and every moment we sit still, is one loss to our Duty, and our Happiness. Let us resolve then, and begin with courage, and proceed with diligence, 'tis our End and Felicity for which we are to strive; and every thing is active for its End and Perfection.

All

All *Creatures* are diligent in serving the Designs of Providence; the *Heavens* are in restless motion, and the *Clouds* are still carrying about their fruitful *Waters*; the *sluggish Earth* it self is always putting forth in variety of *Trees*, and *Grass*, and *Flowers*; the *Rivers* run towards the *Sea*, the *Brooks* move towards them, and the *Sea* within it self. Thus all things even in *inanimate Nature* may mind us of acting towards our end. And if we look a little higher, the *Beasts* of the Field, the *Fowls*, and *Cattel*, and *creeping things* are diligent in *striving* after the good and *perfection* of their *Natures*, and *Solomon* sends the *Sluggard* to those little *Insects*, the *Ant* and *Bee*, to teach him activity and diligence, *Prov. 6. 6.* And shall the *Beasts* act more *reasonably* than the professed *Sons of Reason*? May it not shame us, that we need *Instruction* from the *Creatures* that have no *understanding*? With what face can we carry our heads so high, and look down with contempt upon inferior *Animals*, when they live more *wisely* and more *regularly* than we?

The Sum is, *All things* are incessantly moving towards an *End*; and *Happiness* is *ours*, which therefore should ingage our most careful *Thoughts*, and most active *Endeavours*.

We are solicitous and diligent about things of infinitely less moment, and in effect of none, viz.

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uncertain



uncertain Riches, sensual Pleasures, and worldly Honours; though the way to these is sufficiently difficult and uneasie, yet we are not discouraged; we attempt all those Difficulties with an obstinate Courage, though without promise of any equal assistance, or assurance of success. We are often defeated in our pursuits, and yet we go on. We are overmaster'd by cross events, and yet we try again. We miss our happiness, when we have attain'd our end, and yet we are as active in courting disappointment another time; either we attain not the things we seek, or find no true satisfaction in them, or they die in our hands presently, and yet we strive. And doth not this activity about uncertain, unsatisfying Trifles, shamefully reprove our Negligence in reference to our great End, Happiness and Perfection? In striving for which we have all the powers of Heaven to aid us, and the Word of God, and the Blood of his Son, and the experience of all that ever try'd, to assure us that we shall neither fail of the things we seek, nor of the pleasure that we expect from them. And why then do we lazily sit down, and with the Sluggard say, *There is a Lion in the way*, while we despise greater discouragements, when vain things are to be fought? The Merchant doth not give off, because there are Storms, and the numerous Dangers of the Deep to be met with in his way

to the *Indies*; nor the Souldier lay by his Arms, because of the hazards and toils of War. And do we act *courageously* for petty purchases; and faint and despond when we are to strive for Crowns and eternal Glories?

'Tis true indeed our own *natural* strength is small, in proportion to the *Difficulties* we are to encounter; but the *Grace of God* is sufficient for us, 2 Cor. 12. 9. and we may do all things through Christ that strengthens us, Phil. 4. 13. Nature is weak, and imperfect, but we are not left in the condition of *meer nature*: For we are not under the Law but under Grace, Rom. 6. 14. We are under the influences of the *holy Spirit*, which will remove the mountains, and plain the way before us, if we take care to engage those aids by Faith and sincere endeavour.

For this we may be sure of, that God will never be wanting to us, if we are not so unto our selves. So that the case as to our *natural inability*, and the assistance of Gods Spirit, seems to be thus. A man in a Boat is carried from the Harbour he designs, by the violence of the Current; he is not able only by plying the Oar, to overcome the resistance of the Tide; but a gentle Gale blows with him, which will not of it self carry him up against the Torrent: Neither of them will do it single: But if he hoist the sail, and use the Oar too,



this united force prevails; and he gets happily to the Harbour. This methinks resembles our Condition; we are carried down the Torrent of *evil inclinations* and *Affections*, our own *unaided* powers are too *little* for that *great* force: but the *Holy Spirit* is with us, It breaths upon us, and is ready to assist, if we are *so* to use it, and by the superaddition and ingagement of those blessed Aids, there is no evil in our natures but may be overcome. So that we have no reason to be discouraged at the apprehension of our *impotence*, *out of weakness we shall be made strong*, Heb. 11. 24. If we imploy our *Talent*, though it be but a very *small* one, we shall have more, Mat. 25. 29. And if we *accept* of those divine helps, and *use* them, what was before, to meer *natural* consideration, *uneasie*, will be pleasant and sweetly relishing.

One of the greatest *Difficulties* in the way of Religion, is to begin: the *first* steps are *roughest* to those feet that have been unaccustomed to it. The helps and manifold incouragements we shall meet with in the *Progress*, will render it more agreeable and delightful. Those very toils will be grateful; there is scarce any great *sense* of *pleasure*, but where there is some *Difficulty* and *Pain*. Even our *Work* it self will be *Wages*. And 'tis not only the *End* of Wisdom that is *pleasantness*, but the *very way*, Prov. 3. 17. So that though  
we

we are call'd upon to *strive*, and to *run*, and to *fight*, (which words import Labour) yet we are not required to Quit our pleasures, but to change the objects of them; to leave the delights of Swine for those of Angels; sensual for spiritual Satisfaction.

Thus all things encourage, and invite us to *strive*; God calls upon us, and our own Interests call; Christ Jesus came to engage us to this Work, and the Holy Spirit waits to assist it. If notwithstanding all this, we sit still, our Negligence will be *inexcusable* and *fatal*: or if we *arise* and go a little forward, and then lay us down to take our ease and rest, our state (in the judgement of one that knew) will be worse, more *desperate*, and *excuseless*, 2 Pet. 2. 21.

I Conclude all then, in the words of the Blessed Apostle, 1 Cor. 15. *Therefore my beloved Brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your Labour is not in vain in the Lord: To him be Glory and Honour henceforth, and for ever. Amen.*



... (which was the first time) ...  
... to the ... of ...  
... to the ... of ...

... and in the ...  
... God will ...  
... to the ...  
... our ...  
... and then ...  
... of ...  
... and the ...

... the words of the ...  
... the ...  
... as it ...  
... To him be Glory and Ho-  
... and forever

S E R M O N II.  
**Catholick Charity.**  
Preach'd to the  
Lord Mayor, and Aldermen  
O F  
**L O N D O N.**

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*The Third Edition.*

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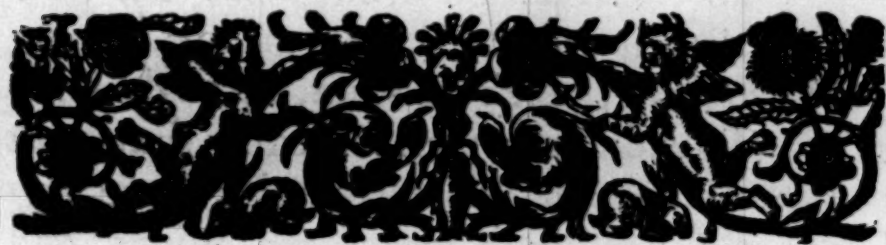


SE R M O N I I.  
Catholick Charity.

Presented to the  
Lord Mayor, and Aldermen  
OF

L O N D O N.

The said Canon.



# SERMON II.

O F

## Catholick Charity.

1 Pet. I. part of xxii. v.

*See that ye Love one another.*



OW many, and how great, have been the Feuds, and still are, of this tottering, and broken Age, there is no man here so happy as to be ignorant: That such Strifes among Brethren are Unnatural, and Diabolical; and that 'tis a lovely thing to see Christians live together in Charity, and Love;  
O there



there is no Christian but will grant : but how the fatal Evil is to be cur'd, and the lovely thing is to be compast ; here's the Knot, here's the Difficulty : To endeavour the reconciling Extreame that are so divided, looks like a design to persuade a friendship between the Winds and Waves : 'Tis very *strange* that Christians should be so at odds, whose Religion is Peace, and Love, and the reasons of whose differences are so small, in proportion to the degree of their Animosities : Our *GOD* is One, and we have the same common *SAVIOUR* ; we profess one *GOSPEL*, and believe the same *Cree*ds ; we have the same *SACRAMENTS*, and the same fundamental *ORDINANCES* : And since we are agreed in *These*, what is there left, that is worth the heat of a *Dispute* ? *what*, that can justifie a *Division* ? Certainly, it is not mens Principles that keep them so at odds, there is somewhat *more* in the matter ; there is something wanting that would heal our Breaches, and compose our Divisions : Love would heal us, if we would be healed.

Now in a general Combustion, 'tis every Christians Duty to bring what Water he can, to throw upon the Flames ; especially it is the office of the Ministers of Peace, to endeavour to promote it. 'Tis a plain subject ; but such are most necessary,

necessary, and this is most seasonable; seasonable at all times, but principally in these, wherein 'tis hard to discern by the practice of Christians that the Duty of Love hath any thing to do with Christianity: And yet this is a vital grace of our Religion: 'Tis the Law and Gospel in a word; for Love is the fulfilling of the Law, and the Gospel is a Law of Love; And 'tis very strange, and very sad, that an Age, which hath so much of light and faith in the pretence, should have so little of Charity and love in the practice; especially, since that light, which is from above, is full of Benignity, and Goodness; and that Faith, which is truly Divine, *worketh by love*. This is that which our Apostle recommends in the words, and I have chosen it for my present subject: In Discouraging it, I shall shew you,

( 1. ) The *Necessity* of the Duty, ( 2. ) Its *Extent*, ( 3. ) The *Excellency* of it; and ( 4. ) propose some *Means* to assist us towards the attainment of this Generous, and Catholick Spirit.

FOR the ( 1. ) The *Necessity* of the Duty; the whole Scripture is so full, and so express in enjoining it, that methinks I might be excused from a labour, that would seem superfluous to one, that *knows* the *Gospel*, and not the practice of those that profess it: But because



the Christianity of most Christians is, ( if I may so speak ) quite another thing from the Christianity of *CHRIST*; it will be necessary to mind them what *HIS* was, that they may be perswaded to conform *theirs* unto it: and though mens understandings are convinced already that Charity is their Duty; yet there is but too much need to represent some of the vast heap of injunctions that make it so, to incline their Wills. I shall therefore briefly lay together a few of the chief instances of this kind; that you may have the distincter sense of the reasons of your Duty, and from them, the most powerful motives to enforce it. In order to this, let us consider in short, the *Injunctions* of Christ, and the *teachings* of his Apostles.

Our Saviour urgeth it as his *New Commandment*; *John* 13. 34. and inculcates it again under the obliging form of his *Command*, *John* 15. 12. He makes it a *distinguishing* note of his *Disciples*, *John* 13. 35. and enjoyns them to love their *Enemies*, *Mat.* 5. 24. He mentions it as the great qualification of those on his Right hand, that shall be received into his Kingdom, *Mat.* 25. 34, 35. and the want of it, as the reason of the dreadful Curse pronounced upon those miserable ones on the Left, at the solemn Judgment, *ver.* 41, 42. St. Paul calls *Love* the *fulfilling*

ling of the Law, Rom. 13. 8, 9, 10. and sets it in the first place among the *fruits* of the Spirit, Gal. 5. 22. yea, reckons it five times over under other Names in the Catalogue, viz. those of Peace, Long-suffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Meekness, ver. 22, 23. He advanceth it above all Gifts and Graces, 1 Cor. 13. above the Tongues of Men and Angels, ver. 1. and above Prophecie, and Mysteries, and Knowledge, and Faith, ver. 2. And the beloved Disciple St. John, who lay in the Bosom of his Dear Lord, and seems to partake most of his Spirit, is transported in the commendation of this Grace. He tells us, that God is love, 1 John 4. 7. and repeats it again, ver. 16. He makes it an Argument of our being born of God, and Knowing Him, ver. 7. and the want of this an evidence of not Knowing God, ver. 8. He counts it the mark of Discipleship; and the contrary, a sign of one that abideth in Death, 1 John 3. 14. He calls him a Murtherer that hates another, ver. 15. and a Lyar, if he pretends to Love God, and loveth not his Brother, 1 John 4. 20. In fine, he out-speaks the greatest heights of Praise, when he saith God is Love, and he that loveth dwelleth in God, and God in him, 1 John 4. 16. I might represent further, that we are commanded to Love without dissimulation, Rom. 12. 9. to be kindly affectioned one to-  
wards



wards another, *ver. 10.* to put on the Breast-plate of Faith, and Love, *1 Thess. 5. 8.* to be pitiful, and courteous, *1 Pet. 3. 8.* to provoke one another to love, and to good works, *Heb. 10. 24.* to serve one another, *Gal. 5. 13.* to love as Brethren, *1 Pet. 3. 8.* We are minded of Christ's New Commandment, *1 Joh. 3. 23.* and of the Message which was from the beginning, *That we should love one another, ver. 11.* and are urged by the consideration of Gods loving us, *1 John 4. 1.* Thus the Apostles exhort, and teach: and they Pray, that our Love may abound, *Phil. 1. 9.* and *1 Thess. 3. 12.* and give solemn Thanks for it, when they have found it, *2 Thess. 1. 3.*

And now considering the expressness of all these places, I cannot see, but that any Duty of Religion may be more easily evaded than *this*; and those who can fantasie themselves Christians, and yet continue in the contrary Spirit, and Practice, may conceit themselves religious, though they live in the constant commission of the greatest sins. And if *such* can quiet their Consciences, and shuffle from all these plain Recommendations and Injunctions; they have found a way to escape all the Laws of God, and may, when they please, become Christians, without Christianity: For the evidence, I have suggested to prove the necessity of this Duty, doth not consist in half

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Sentences, and doubtful Phrases, in fancied Analogies, and far-fetcht Interpretations ; but in plain Commands , and frequent Inculcations ; in earnest Intreaties, and pressing Importunities ; in repeated Advices, and passionate Commendations : And those whom all these will not move, are Incapable of being perswaded, against their humour, or their interest, to any Duty of Religion. So that, though I see never so much eagerness for an Opinion, or Heat for an indifferent Circumstance without the conscience of Christian Love ; I shall never call that forwardness for those little things, Zeal, or Religion : Yea, though those warm men should sacrifice their Lives to their beloved Trifles, I should not think them *Martyrs* ; but fear rather , that they went from one Fire to another , and a Worse. And in this I have the great Apostle to warrant me , who saith : Though I give my body to be burned, and have not Charity, it profiteth me nothing, 1 Cor. 13. 3. Thus of the *First Head*, the *Necessity* of the duty.

**I** Come to the II. the *Extent*. Our Love ought,  
( 1. ) To be extended to all Mankind.  
The more general it is , the more Christian,  
and the more like unto the Love of God,  
who causeth his *Sun* to *shine*, and his *Rain* to  
*fall*.



*fall upon the Good, and upon the Evil.* And though our Arms be very short, and the ordinary influence of our kindness and good will, can reach but to a very few, yet we may pray for all men, and desire the good of all the world; and in these we may be charitable without bounds. But these are not all. Love obligeth us to relieve the Needy, and help the Distressed, to visit the Sick, and succour the Fatherless and Widows, to strengthen the Weak, and to confirm the Staggering and Doubting, to encourage the Vertuous, and to reprove the Faulty; and in short, to be ready in all the offices of Kindness, that may promote the good of any man, *Spiritual*, or *Temporal*, according to the utmost of our power, and capacity. *The good man is Merciful to his Beast*, and the Christian ought to be Charitable to his Brother, and his Neighbour; and every man is our Brother, and every one that Needs us, is our Neighbour: And so our Love ought to extend to all men universally, without limitation; though with this distinction.

(II.) That the more especial Objects of our Love ought to be those that agree with us in a common Faith, *Gal. 6. 10.* that is, All Christians, as Christians, and because such. Whatever makes our Brother a Member of the Church Catholick, that gives him a title to our nearer affe-

affections, which ought to be as large as that. Our Love must not be confin'd by names, and petty agreements, and the interests of Parties, to the corners of a Sect: but ought to reach as far as Christianity it self, in the largest notion of it. To love those that are of our Way, Humour, and Opinion, is not Charity, but Self-love; 'tis not for Christ's sake, but our own. To Love like Christians, is to Love his Image from whom we are so called, And that consists not in *demure Looks* and *affected Phrases*, in *melting Tones* and *mimick Gestures*, in *Heats* and *Vehemence*, in *Rapture*, and *Ecstasie*, in *systems of Opinion*, and *scrupulosity* about Nothing: But in *Faith*, and *Patience*, *Innocence*, and *Integrity*; in Love to God, and Charity to all the World; in a modest *sweetness*, and humble *Deportment*; in a *peaceable Spirit*, and *readiness* to obey God, and Those He hath set over Us: Where-ever These are, there is the Image of our Lord, and There ought to be our Love; though the persons thus affected, are Ignorant of many things, and err in many; though they differ from us in some Opinions we count Orthodox, and walk not in the particular ways or Circumstances which We esteem Best. And thus briefly of the *Extent* of the Duty, we ought to Love *ALL MEN*, but especially *ALL Christians*, I descend to the *Third* general, *viz.*

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(III.) The



(III.) The *Excellency* of Christian Love, which I represent in the following particulars.

(I.) *IT* is the Image of God; and of all the graces renders us most like our Maker: For *God is love*, and the *Lover of men*; and his tender *Mercies are over all his Works*: And the most suitable apprehension we can form of his Being, is, to look on him as an *Omnipotent*, *Omniscient*, *Immutable Goodness*. And is it not a glorious Excellency, that makes Men like the fountain of all perfection? Our unhappy first Parents lost Paradise, by aspiring to be like God in Knowledge: and if we endeavour to be like him in Love, we shall be in the way of gaining a better Paradise than they lost.

(II.) *LOVE* is the Spirit of Angels, Glorified Souls, and the best of Men. There is nothing by which the Angelical nature is so much distinguish'd from the Diabolical, as Love, and Goodness; for the Devils have Spiritual, and Immortal natures, and great degrees of Power and Knowledge; and those perhaps not much inferiour to what is to be found in some of the better Spirits: so that the great difference is not in the excess of natural perfections, which the Angels of Light have above those of Darkness; but in this, that the former abound in Love, Sweetness, and Benignity; and

and the latter, in Malice, Cruelty, and Revenge; these are the very Image of Satan, and Spirit of Hell. Whereas all the Celestial Inhabitants live in the joyful exercise of uninterrupted Love and endearments: Nor is that Love confined to the blessed and glorified Company, but it sheds it self abroad upon the nether world; and they are *Ministring Spirits for our good*, Heb. 1. 14. They so far Love us, that they can stoop from Heaven to serve us. There is Joy there at the Conversion of a Sinner; and no doubt there is Love to converted Saints, and care and pity for all the rest of Men. For the spirits of the just made perfect are freed from their forward humours, and pettish natures, their mistaken Zeal, and fondness of Opinions, which straitned their Affections while they were on Earth: and now they are enlarged by the vast improvements of their Knowledge, and accomplishment of their Vertue; by a fuller sense of Divine Love, and of their Duty; by the genius of their company, and the imployment of the happy Place. So that in Heaven all are truly *Catholick* in their Affections:

And the better any man is, the more he is so upon Earth: The good man makes not himself his center, nor are his thoughts wholly engrossed about his own concernments; but he is careful-



ly solicitous for the general benefit, and never so much pleased as when he is made an instrument of Divine Goodness, to promote the interests of his Christian brethren. 'Twas an high strain of Love in *Moses*, exprest towards the Transgressing Israelites, when he was content to be blotted out of *Gods Book*, rather than that their Sin should not be blotted out, *Exod. 32. 32.* And *St. Paul* was no less Zealously affectionate towards the Jews, when he said, he could wish himself accursed from Christ, viz. separated from Christian communion as a most vile and abject person, for their sakes, *Rom. 9. 3.* These were spirits whom Religion and Divine Love had enlarged: and the more any man advanceth in Christianity, the nearer he approacheth to this generous, heroick temper.

( III. ) *LOVE* is an eminent branch of the Divine Life, and Nature. *Love is of God, and every one that Loveth, is born of God*, saith the Apostle, *1 John 4. 7, 8.* The Divine Nature in us, is the Image of God Pourtray'd, and lively drawn upon the regenerated Soul; and I noted before, that Love is the vital Image of our Maker; 'tis His Spirit infused into us, and growing in us; and upon that account to be preferred before all Gifts, and natural Perfections: as *St. Paul* hath done it in the mentioned *1 Cor. 13.* And the

the common Gifts of the Spirit differ from this special Grace, as the Painters Picture doth from his Son: His Counterfeit may indeed, in a superficial appearance to the Eye, resemble him more than his Child; but yet it is but an empty shadow, destitute, and incapable of his Life, and Nature: So there are a sort of Gifts, that have a spiritual appearance, and may, to those that see things at distance, or have not their senses exercised, seem more like the divine nature, than this modest vertue: But those that come near them, and are better able to discern, perceive that in themselves they are without the Divine Life, and Motion, and are meer Lifeless Pictures. And here I dare say, that the happiest faculty to Preach Plausibly, and Pray with Fluency, and Eloquence; to Discourse Devoutly, and readily to Interpret Scripture, if it be not joyned with a benign and charitable spirit, is no participation of the God-like life and nature; nor indeed any more Divine, than those common gifts, and natural parts, which those that think highly of themselves upon these accounts, despise. For very Evil men have been eminent in these accomplishments, and Wicked Spirits are without question endowed with them; and they are of themselves arguments of nothing but a faculty of Imitation, a devotional Complexion, and



and warm Imagination: Whereas on the other hand, Charity, and Christian Love are good Evidence of a Renewed state, and nature. Our Saviour made it a Character; *Joh. 13.* and the Apostle concludes from it, *1 John 3. 14.* *By this we know that we are passed from death to life, because we love the Brethren.* And if this be a Mark, and St. John be not mistaken, I doubt that some who are very gracious, by many Signs of their own, will want one of Christs, to prove their comfortable presumption.

(I V.) *LOVE* is the bond and tye of Christian Communion; *How can two walk together except they are agreed?* The Church is a Body consisting of many Members, which unless they Unite, and send their mutual supplies one to another, the whole is distempered, and in the ready way to Death and Dissolution. Now Charity is that vital Cement whereby they are United, and the Soul by which the common body lives; that whereby the League between the members is preserved, and health with it. When this decays, sad symptoms, and mortal evils follow. We see in Nature, the great Fabrick of the World is maintained by the mutual Friendship, and conspiracy of its parts; which should they universally fall out, and break the bond of Amity that is between them; should they act their Antipathies

tiptathies upon each other ; yea , should they but cease to serve one another for the general good ; the whole frame would be dissolved, and all things shuffled into their old Chaos, and Abyss. And the greatest evils that have, or can happen to the Church, have been the effects of the Decay of Charity, and those intestine Divisions that have grown up in it. From these she hath always suffered more, than from external persecutions : The flames within have consumed her, when those from without, have only findg'd her garments.

( V. ) *LOVE* is the most Catholick grace, and upon that account the most excellent ; since that which promotes the good of the whole, is better than any private perfection : for which reason, things in nature will quit their particular interests, when the common good so requireth ; as heavy bodies will ascend , and light bodies descend , to prevent a chasm , and breach in Nature. Now of all the divine vertues, there is none of so large an influence, as *Love* ; 'tis a grace designed for the good of the community, as the principle of self-Love is for the preservation of particular beings. This stirs up our endeavours for the good of others, and especially for the general good. The Church receives no wound, but Love feels the smart of it ; nor is  
any



any member of it afflicted, but Love is grieved. This is the very Spirit of our dear Lord, who was touched with a *feeling of our Infirmities*. And to these I add this last.

(VI.) *LOVE* commends Christianity to those without, and cleanseth the Profession of it from many Spots it hath contracted within. The generality of men are not able to judge of Religions themselves, but usually reckon of them, as they do of their Professors. Whatever is excellent, or else unworthy, in a Votary of Religion, redounds to the credit, or disparagement, of the Religion he hath adopted: So that, were the charity and goodness of Christianity transcribed into the lives of Christians, it would ravish the eyes of all Beholders, and out-shine all other Professions. Men would more easily be perswaded to believe that Religion to be from God, whose Professors they saw to be so God-like. Love and goodness prevail where nothing else will; these win and captivate the Soul; And such conquests are better, and more noble than either those of Arts, or Arms, which only bring the body under. 'Tis but small credit to any Religion to cut its way by the Sword, or gain upon the world by Power, or Policy; That which opens it self a passage by its native loveliness, and beauty, is the most Illustrious, and makes the surest, and most generous

nerous Conquests. And were Christendom but Christian in this regard, and the Professors of the true Religion, truly Religious, that is, abounding in that charity, and goodness, which Christianity enjoyns; our Religion would spread its wings through the World, and all contrary Professions would lie in the dust before it: Whereas the Divisions, and fatal feuds of Paganized, degenerated Christendom, are now the great partition-Wall between Us, and the Heathen-World; yea, they are more particularly the great scandal of the Reformation, and make us the scorn of Those of *Rome*.

And O that They that speak and pray much against the *Beast*, would not prove instrumental to uphold his Throne! We expect, and hope for glorious times when the Man of Sin is faln; and doubtless there shall be such: But then the glory of those times consists not in external rule, or dominion of the Church, but in the Universal Restauration of it to its primitive Simplicity, and Purity: Then will the Church be Glorious indeed, when all Christians shall unite upon the Foundation of an Holy Life, and the joynt Profession of the few, plain, Fundamentals of Faith: When they shall make real Goodness the Object of their affections towards each other; and all Differences in Opinions and dispensable Practices,

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etices, the Objects of their mutual Forbearance : When such times as these shall come, then doth the Reign of Christ begin : And this is the true, and wish't *Millennium*. Now we cannot expect those glorious days which are to Commence upon the Fall of *Anti-christ*, till we see all Christians sincerely set upon Destroying what is *Anti-christian* in themselves. *Anti-christ* will not be overthrown by our declaiming against Him, and spitting the fire of Rage at the Infallible Chair. It will be to better purpose for us to examine what of *Anti-christianism* remains in our selves : And while Rancour, and Bitterness, Rage, and Animosities upon the Account of Difference in smaller Opinions are in our Borders, *Anti-christ* hath a Throne among us ; and there is nothing could be so Effectual a Blow at the Root of *Anti-christianism*, as the exercise of Charity and Catholick Goodness. And when we see these take place, then may we Triumphantly sing forth, *BABYLON IS FALN*.

**I** Come now *Fourthly* to the *Means* of attaining this excellent and Catholick Temper ; And I propose them by way of *DIRECTION*, *CONSIDERATION*, and *CAUTION*. The *DIRECTIONS* are these :

(I.) Ac-

(I.) Acknowledge worth in any man. Whatever is good is from God, and He is to be lov'd, and owned in all things; as well in the Paint upon the Butter-flies wing, as in the glorious, uniform lustre of the Sun; as well in the composure of the little Ant, as in the vast Bodies of the Whale, or Elephant; In the least Herb under our feet, as well as in the Stupendous Fabrick of the Heavens over us: And moral Perfections are to be acknowledg'd, as well as these natural ones: We are to love Vertue in an Heathen, and whatever is Well, or Worthy in those, whose Apprehensions are most distant from our own: And we must take care that we make not our Relish, the Measure of Worth and Goodness: Say not this is excellent, because 'tis agreeable to your particular Palates; and that on the other hand is Vile, and Loathsome, because 'tis distastful to your Gust and Genius: There are various kinds, and degrees of Excellency, which differently affect the diversity of Tempers, and Constitutions; And, at the best, we are Imperfectly good, and therefore cannot be the Measure of it. Let us then be so Ingenuous as to own the vertue and the goodness that is in all parties, and Opinions, Let us commend and love it: This will be a means to sweeten our Spirits, and to remove the Animosities we are apt to conceive against the Persons of Dissenters;

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ters; and 'twill ingage them on the other hand, to a greater kindness for us, and so Lessen our Distance, and Disagreements.

There is a kind of Spirit among some, which is so different from that Charity, which thinketh no Evil, 1 Cor. 13. that it thinks nothing else concerning those of a differing Judgement, but that their Vertues are dull Morality; and their Piety, Hypocritical Pretensions; or what-ever Worse Ill-will can Invent, and Rage can say: They will not believe that to be a Jewel, which they find among so much supposed Rubbish. But let us take Care, that we deny not God the Honour of his Gifts, and Graces; or proudly fancy that he hath given us the Monopoly: This is contrary to that Charity which is not *puffed up, and doth not behave it self unseemly.* Or, if we could modestly suppose, that there is nothing but Ignorance, and mistake among all those who are not of our Opinion; yet however, their Vertues ought to be acknowledg'd: The Son of God was to be Worshipped, even when he lay in the Stable; and the Ark to be owned, when among the *Philistins.* ( 'Tis a sign that we love God for himself, if we Love him every where ) And indeed, that Worth is more to be admired that grows up in an uncultivated Soyl, and among the Weeds of Errour, and false Principles :

ples : To find a Rose, or Tulip in a Garden, is a common thing, and merits less of our regard; but to meet with them in the High-way, or open Fields, this ingageth our nearer Notice, and recommends the Flowers to our more particular Kindness : Thus Vertue, though in all men excellent, yet 'tis no more than is expected to be in Persons of Knowledge, and right Judgement; But in the Ignorant, and Mistaken, it thrives under Disadvantages, and deserves more to be Cherish'd, and Incourag'd. And now if 'twere possible to bring the divided World to these Ingenuous Acknowledgements, men would find their Spirits compos'd, and their Animosities qualifi'd; They would see they have Friends, even in the Tents of their Enemies; and *this*, Apprehended and Own'd mutually, would be a very hopeful way to endear and reconcile us.

(II.) *Be much in the Contemplation of the Love of God.* He that knows how much God hath Loved him, hath a mighty Reason to Love his Brother; The Apostle urgeth the Argument, 1 John 4. 11. *If God so Loved us, we ought also to Love one another* : and he that considers, cannot choose; for he must needs find himself sweetly Ingaged to Love God, of whose Love he is sensible; and he that loves Him, loves all things in him : For all things are *his*, and he tenders every thing he hath



hath made. The Love of God doth not confine us to his single abstracted Essence, but requires our Kindness to all that bear his Image, yea and produceth it. Seraphick Love will be Catholick; It doth not burn like a Lamp in a Sepulchre, but 'tis like the Stars of Heaven, that impart themselves to all things: And as the Planets, that receive their Light from the Sun, do not suck it in, and ingross it, but disperse, and shed it abroad upon the most distant Bodies; in like manner, a Christian Soul that is warmed and lightned by Divine Love doth not keep it within it self, but communicates its benign Influences to all the Objects that are within its reach. The Love of God in its proper Nature is diffusive, and very opposite to Envy and Animosity; It Dispels the Clouds, and Allays the Tempests that arise from the Body, and its Appetites; and composeth the Soul to the Sweetest, and most even Temper; It Inlarges our Minds, and Softens our Affections, and Calms our Passions, and Smooths the Ruggedness of our Natures; It destroys our Pride and Selfishness, and so strikes up the Roots of Enmity, and Divisions; and thus disposeth us to the most Generous and Comprehensive Charity.

( III. ) *Make the great Design of Religion, yours; and know, that the Intent of that, is, not to fill*  
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our heads with Notion, or to teach us Systems of Opinion; to resolve us a Body of Difficult Points, or to Inable us to talk plausibly for lesser Truths; But to furnish our minds with encouragements of Virtue and instances of Duty; to direct us to govern our Passions, and subdue our appetites and self-wills, in order to the glory of God, the good of Societies, and our own present and eternal Interests: And if Christians would take this to be their business, and conscientiously apply themselves unto it; they would find work enough in their own hearts to imploy them, and neither have time, nor occasion to pry into the Infirmities of others, nor inclination to quarrel with them: they would see how unwise it is to be seeking, and making Enemies, when they have so many within themselves; and how dangerous, to be diverted to a needless, and unjust forein War, while a deadly domestick Foe is strengthened by it. And methinks 'tis wonderful, and 'tis sad, that we should be so mild and indulgent to the Enemies that we are bound to engage against by our Duty to God, and to our selves, by his Laws, and our own Reasons, by the precepts and examples of his Son our Saviour, by his Sacraments, and by his Blood, by all things in Religion, and all things in Interest; and at the same time, be so eager against those, whom we ought to consider as Friends,



Friends, upon the account of our relation to God, and the tie of common nature, and the obligations of Divine Commands, and the interests of Societies, and the practice of the best times past, and the hopes of a future happiness.

This is lamentable in it self, and yet the more so, for being common : And it seems to me such a kind of madness, as if a man should be picking causless quarrels with his Neighbours about a chip of Wood, or a broken Hedge, when a Fire in his house is consuming his Goods, and Children : Such Frenzies, and much greater, are our mutual enmities and oppositions, while we quietly sit down in our unmortified Affections. And we should know them to be so, did we understand our Danger, or our Duty, and seriously mind either the one, or other: We should find then that a Christian hath no such enemies as the Flesh, the world, and the Devil ; that these will require all our care, and imploy all our strength, and diligence: and he that knows this, and considers, and acts suitably, will find too much in himself to censure, and oppose, and too little to admire himself for above other men; He will see sufficient reason to incline him to pardon his erring brother, and be the more easily induced to exercise charity, which himself so many ways needs. The last Direction is this.

(IV.) *Stu-*

( IV. ) *Study the moderate pacifick ways, and principles, and run not in extremes :* both Truth, and Love are in the middle ; Extremes are dangerous. After all the swaggering, and confidence of Disputers, there will be uncertainty in lesser matters : and when we travel in uncertain Roads, 'tis safest to choose the Middle. In this, though we should miss a lesser truth, ( which yet is not very likely ) we shall meet with Charity, and our gain will be greater than our loss. He that is extreme in his Principles, must needs be narrow in his Affections : whereas he that stands on the middle path, may extend the arms of his Charity to those on both sides : It is indeed very natural to most, to run into extremes : and when men are faln Out with a Practice, or Opinion, they think they can never remove to too great a distance from it ; being frightened by the steep before them, they run so far back, till they fall into a precipice behind them. *Every Truth is near an Errour ;* for it lies between two Falshoods : and he that goes far from One, is apt to slip into the other ; and while he flies from a Bear, a Lyon meets him. So that the best way to avoid the Danger is to steer the middle Course ; in which we may be sure there is Charity and Peace, and, very probably, Truth in their Company. Thus of my Directions.

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**F**OR CONSIDERATIONS, I'll propose such, as shew the *Unreasonableness* of our Enmities, and Disagreements upon the account of different Opinions; which will prove that our Affections ought to meet, though our Judgements cannot. My first is this,

(1.) *Love is part of Religion; but Opinions for the sake of which we lose Charity, are not so.* The First, I have proved already: and for the other, we may consider, That Religion consists not in knowing many things, but in practising the few plain things we know. *THE NECESSARY PRINCIPLES OF FAITH LYE IN A LITTLE ROOM.* This is *Life Eternal* to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent; Saith he that best knew what was *Eternal Life*, and what necessary unto it, *Joh. 17. 3.* And the Apostle St. Paul draws up all into the same two Principles. *He that cometh unto God must know that he is, and that he is a Rewarder of them that diligently seek him; Heb. 11. 6.* St. Peter was pronounced blessed upon the single Profession, that Jesus was Christ, the Son of the Living God, *Mat. 16. 16.* and the Eunuch was baptized upon the same, *Act. 8. 37.* St. Paul reckons these as the only Necessaries to Salvation, *Rom. 10. 9.* If thou confess with thy Mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe  
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in thy heart that God hath raised him from the Dead, thou shalt be saved. — And St. John to the same purpose, *Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God,* This Faith indeed must suppose the general Principles of natural Religion, and produce the Real Fruits of Righteousness to make it effectual to its end; and these supposed, the Apostles speak as if it contain'd all that is essentially necessary to be believed, and known, in order to our Happiness. Thus the *Fundamentals* of belief are few, and plain: For certainly the Divine Goodness would not lay our Eternal Interests in Difficulties, and multitudes; things hard to be understood, and retained. *The difficult work of Religion is not in the Understanding, but in the Affections, and Will.* So that the Principles, in which Religion consists, are the clearly revealed Articles in which we are agreed. For the others about which we differ, and dispute, though some of them may be consequences of those, and good helps to the practice of Religion, yet I should be loth to make them a necessary and essential part of it: For he that saith they are, concludes all men under a state of Ruine and Damnation, who either do not know, or are not able to receive them: An uncharitableness, that is as bad as Heresie, if it be not one it self. The sum is, Religion lies in few Principles, I mean as to the Essence of it;



and that principally consists in Practice. So the Prophet reckons, *Mic. 6. 8.* *He hath shewed thee O man what is good: and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do Justice, and love Mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?* And *St. James* gives an Account of Religion like it, *Jam. 1. 17.* *True Religion, and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to Visit the Widow, and Fatherless in their Afflictions, and to keep himself unspotted from the World.* Religion is an Holy Life, and Charity is a main branch of that; But Opinions are no vital part, nor do they appertain to the substance of it. And shall we lose a Limb for an Excrecence, or an Ornament; An Essential of Religion for that which is but accessory, and extrinſick; Charity, for an Opinion? I think 'tis not reasonable, and I hope you think so likewise. But I offer to your Consideration,

(II.) *Charity is certainly our Duty, but many of the Opinions, about which we fall out, are uncertainly true; viz. as to us.* The main, and Fundamental Points of Faith are indeed as firm as the Centre, but the Opinions of men are as fluctuating as the Waves of the Ocean. The Root, and body of a Tree is fast, and unshaken; while the Leaves are made the sport of every Wind: And Colours sometimes vary with every position of the Object, and the Eye, though the Light of the Sun be an uniform

uniform Splendour. The Foundation of God standeth sure, but men often build upon it what is very Tottering, and uncertain. The great Truths of Religion are easily discernable, but the smaller, and remoter ones require more sagacity and acuteness to descry them; and the best sight may be deceived about such obscure, and distant Objects. And methinks 'tis very strange, that men should be so excessively confident of the Truth, and Certainty of their Opinions, since they cannot but know the Weakness of Humane understanding in general, and cannot but often have found the Fallibility of their own. The Apostle tells us, that *we know but in part*, 1 Cor. 13. 9. and makes Confidence an Argument of Ignorance, 1 Cor. 8. 2. If any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet, as he ought to know. And Solomon reckons it as an argument of Folly; *The Fool rageth, and is confident*: and there is nothing that discovers it more;

For let us consider; The Scripture hath not been so clear, and express in defining lesser Points; and the words, in which they are thought to be Lodged, are many times figurative, and obscure, and of various meaning, spoken only by the by, or agreeably to forms of speech, or customs, that we do not know; or by way of condescension to common Apprehension: And therefore we see  
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that Interpretations are infinite, and there is no sort of men less agreed, than Commentators: All Opinions plead Scripture, and many pretend to reason, and most to Antiquity. The Learned, and the Prudent; Churches, and Councils; Confessors, and Fathers; the former, and the latter Ages; the Vertuous, and the Devout; the Credulous, and the Inquisitive, they have all differ'd in the lesser matters of Belief: And every man differs from almost every other in something, and every man differs often from himself in many things: Age hath altered our Judgements, or we are children still: Our Affections change our Thoughts, and our Imaginations shift the Scene: and what we call Reason is many times but a chain of Phantasms. And we are guided by prejudices, and over-ruled by Authority, and formed by Education; and suck in our Opinions Carelessly, and by accident: We are deeply settled, before we have examined; and when we examine, 'tis but by halves; we see but few things, and judge all things by those we see: We either seek not Truth at all, or are unable to manage a due, and impartial search; when we stumble upon it, we do not know it; and when 'tis in sight we boggle, and are afraid, and run away from it; or stand, to pelt it with dirt, and vile Names: In the mean while, we catch  
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at shadows, and grow fond of the Images of our own Fancies, and cry up these for Truth, and Faith; and disturb Societies, and the Peace of mankind, to gain credit to our Dreams. Such a thing is man, and such reasons have we to be confident of our Opinions; and to hate those that are not of our Perswasion; and to forsake a certain Duty for Doubtful Tenents. These things, well considered, might lessen our fondness towards Opinions, and promote our Charity towards each other; which will grow by the same degrees, by which the other decreaseth. And that it may, I add this further to be consider'd, viz.

( III. ) *Christian Love is necessary, but Agreement in Opinions is neither necessary, nor possible.* 'Tis very true indeed, that the *WAY* to *HEAVEN* is but *One*, and to walk in that, is the one thing necessary: but then that is not the particular Path of this Sect, or another: but the way of an Holy Life; which may be practised under very different Forms of Apprehension, and Belief. Though the way be not broad in respect of Practice, or sensual Indulgence; yet it hath a Latitude in respect of Judgement, and Circumstantial Opinion. The Paths may be many in this Royal Road; and 'tis not absolutely necessary, that we should measure Foot-steps, and all ex-



actly tread the same : He that goes in the plainest, and nearest, is in the best condition for Pleasure, and Safety ; but another that goes about, or in the rugged and uneven Path, may come to the same journeys end, though with more difficulty, and danger : And I shall not deny to afford him Pardon for the folly of his choice, lest possibly I should need it my self.

'Tis true, we are commanded to hold the Unity of the Spirit, and that is necessary : but this is in the Essentials of Faith, and Life, in which all good men are agreed, notwithstanding that their froward Zeal will not permit them to see it : Unity in the lesser things may be requisite for Peace, and the Interests of Societies ; but 'tis not absolutely so, for the Salvation of mens Souls : Yea different Apprehension about Opinions in Religion might consist well enough with Peace, and publique safety likewise, could men be perswaded to be modest, to keep their Apprehensions to themselves, or not to fanſie their Conceits necessary for all the rest of mankind ; and so vex their Neighbours, provoke their Rulers, and disſettle Government, for the Propagation of them.

'Tis a frequent Wish with some, *That all men were once of one mind* : but then it must be *theirs*, no doubt ; for they would not judge it reasonable

ble upon other terms: They may as well wish that we were all of one Age, Complexion, Humour, and Degree of Understanding: In these we see Providence hath order'd a great diversity, and in this there is both Beauty and Convenience: Perhaps variety of Opinions may be contrived into us for the same reasons; and much of the pleasure of Conversation, and inquiry would be lost, if there were an universal Harmony in our Conceptions: But however this is, 'tis enough, that such an agreement is not necessary; Yea, I take the other Step, 'tis impossible,

Our Tempers, Capacities, Educations, Genius's, Converses, Interests, and Accidents are strangely divers; and therefore our Apprehensions must needs be different. There is scarce any exact likeness in Nature: and all the variety that is, ariseth from the various mixture of a few Elements: How great a diversity then must needs proceed from the different Combination of so many things as influence our Belief, and Judgements? Since the World began to this day, men have been of different Opinions; and, no doubt, they will be so to the end of it: For circumstances consider'd, 'tis morally impossible it should be otherwise.

Seeing then that Charity is necessary, and agreement in Opinions is neither necessary, nor  
S possible:



possible; we ought to comply with our main Duty, notwithstanding any lesser difference. If this were consider'd, there might be some Hope of reconciling; and Contenders would see, that though they differ, yet they *need* not, they *ought* not to divide; but Unity of Affection might be preserved amid diversity of Opinions: For which happy Christian temper men would see more reason, if they would Consider,

(I V.) That *Errours, of themselves, are Infirmities of the Understanding, and not Enormities of the Will*: For no man is willing to be deceived: So that they ought not to be the Objects of our hatred, but our pity. We hate no man for being Poor, or Blind, or Lame: and Errour is the Poverty, and Blindness, and Lameness of the mind. We all are Pilgrims in our Way to the *Jerusalem* that is above: If some will go in this Path, some in the other, these in a Circuit, and those amongst the Rocks; we may be sure, 'tis because they know not the danger, and Inconveniences, which they Choose: So that we may, and we ought to perswade them, all we can, not to divert into those Ways: But if they will, upon the Supposition, and Belief of their being best; we may lament their unhappy mistake, but must not beat them, or throw Stones at them for it.

Errour

Errour is founded in Ignorance; even that gross one of the *Sadducees* about the *Resurrection* is imputed to their *not knowing* the *Scriptures*, nor the power of God, *Mat. 22. 29.* and both Reason, and Charity requires us to pity Ignorance, and to pardon it. Our Saviour makes it the motive of his Prayer for the forgiveness of the Jews that Murdered him, *Luke 23. 34. Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.* 'Tis very true, that Errour many times is occasioned by a corrupt Bias in the Will, and Affections; But then if our erring Brother be sincere in other matters, we are not to conclude that his Understanding is this way corrupted; and we can scarce be certain of it in any case: Or, if it be, (if he believes himself) he doth not know that his Interest or Inclination are the things, which prevail with his Judgment: and so Ignorance is at the bottom still: For 'tis a Contradiction that any man should believe that, which he doth not think is true, though he have never so much Appetite, or Interest to incline him: And if these oblige a man to profess against the Dictates of his mind, or to suspend the exercise of it, (as oftentimes they do) such men are to be reckon'd under the Character of Vicious, and not barely erroneous; and so are not to be counted among meer Dissenters in Opinion, concerning whom I am now discoursing.

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And



And that you may not rashly judge that your Brother speaks against his Conscience, because he professeth the belief of things that to us seem very wild and absurd, and so hate him as a time-server, and an Hypocrite; when he is but an innocently mistaken person: I add this other Consideration, *viz.*

(V.) *That we ought to make allowance for Education, Authority, and fair pretences; which have a mighty power, even over honest minds, and do often unavoidably lead them into Errour. For let us consider, how easily we receive the first impressions, and how deeply they sink into our souls: Childhood refuseth no folly, examines no absurdity; Education makes it any thing; The first is entertained as best, and what-ever offers after, is execrated and despised, if it be not like it. This is the condition of all Man-kind in their tender age, and the far greatest part carry the apprehensions to their graves, that they sucked in infancy; And hence it comes about, that there is nothing more impossible, or ridiculous, even in dreams, and distracted imaginations, than the things which have been entertain'd by great numbers of men, as Sacred: There are no conceits in Bedlam more wild and extravagant, than many about Religion, which have been believ'd firmly, and zealously promoted, and fiercely contended for,*  
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even to Blood and Desolation, by mighty Nations, and whole Empires; by Princes and People; by Great men, and Learned; by Devout, and Prudent, in long Successions from Father to Son, many Ages together. And all these follies have been first imposed by Education, and confirmed by Authority, and Custom; The power of which is very great, and very few have strength enough in their Understandings to overcome it: And in matters of Religion they are afraid to use their Reasons against those *Follies* which are taught to be Divine Dictates, above all humane Intellect, and not to be tryed or examined by it. Upon which accounts it hath been, that Mankind hath been more extravagantly mad in many Tenents about Religion, than in any thing else whatsoever: For in other things the use of Reason is permitted, but in Religion it hath been almost Universally denied.

Thus then, the far greatest part of men, are slaves to the Principles in which they were bred; and our constitution, infirmity, and circumstances are such, that very few can help it; and error in the most is in a manner unavoidable, at least in the weaker sort, and Herd of men: For they have no doubts, about what they have been always Taught; and have little or no capacity, inclination, or opportunity, to Examine: So  
that:



that 'tis morally impossible for them to free themselves from the prejudices they lie under ; And consequently we ought not to judge them Insincere, because they profess things incredible, and ridiculous ; or hate them for believing them, when 'tis so difficult, and so almost impossible, that they should do otherwise.

And yet we are further to consider, how much those that differ from us, and err in the things in which they differ, are to be allowed upon the account of the Authority, and Example of many learned, wise, pious, and devout Men that instruct, and encourage them in their way ; and deeply threaten any diversion from it : This is a mighty prejudice, when 'tis on the side of Errour, and, no doubt, many honest minds are carried away by it. We are naturally apt to follow others, especially those that we esteem ; and 'tis reasonable to do so in things, that we are not so well able to judge of our selves ; and modest to permit our judgements to be inclin'd by the sense of those that are wiser, and better. So that He may be a good man, and a lover of Truth, that yet is much Mistaken in his Opinion ; which, in such a case as this, is his Unhappiness, not his Fault.

And I may add the other thing mention'd, viz. that we ought to allow our erring brother for the fair, and specious pretences which many  
errours

errours plead for themselves; as Antiquity, Piety, Consent of Churches, Reverend Names, Spirituality, Gods Glory, Gospel-light, and Liberty, and many other such, which sound well, and sway much with many very pious people who are taken with the pretence, but are not able to discern the fallacy; and so swallow the error for the sake of those fine Names, wherewith it is gilded: In which case also, there is Infirmary, and Misfortune, that require our Pity, and our Charity; but nothing that can justify our Rage or Hatred. Yea, why should we not Love him for the Zeal and Respect he hath to those good things, the shadows of which have deceived him, rather than Hate him for his weakness in Mistaking? And for those that are so Rigid to the Infirmaryes of Mistaken Judgements, I wish they would Consider,

(VI.) That in many things they may err themselves; and therefore shall have need of the Charity of others. There is none of us, I hope, so immodest, as to say, or think, that he is mistaken in nothing: If any do, that person errs more, than most of those whose Errours he censures: And if he acknowledgeth that he errs in some things, though he knows not the particulars: he is himself concerned in the plea for Charity towards the erroneous. If we were infallible, and  
all.



all our Opinions were Certainties, and Demonstrations, we might then have more pretence for our Stifness, and Severities; But to confess the Infirmities of our own understandings, and to give no candid allowances to other mens failings, this is utterly inexcusable, and contrary to our own interests: For in this rigorous way, every man condemns himself, and puts a weapon into every other mans hand to destroy him. Let him that is without Errour, throw the first Stone at the Erroneous; but if he begins, that is obnoxious himself, what favour can he expect? The same reason he hath to Assault those before him, all the rest have to Pelt him: So that to hate, and reproach our Brother for his supposed Errours, is, besides the other evil things, very unwise, and unpolitick, and contrary to the principles of Safety, and Self-love. If this were well consider'd, Interest might perhaps effect that in some, which sense of Duty cannot.

Now in all this, I have no intention to make Apologies for Errour, but to lay sure grounds for Universal Love; and what I have said, is not for the Interest of any particular Sect, but it is the joynt concern of all parties in Religion; since they all equally need each others Charity. If any man be Angry, and think I would have him be too kind to the Erroneous; he will, I hope, be  
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pacified, when he considers, that I also design to make them kind to him; and the kindness I plead for, respects mens Persons, and Vertuous Qualities, and my Charity is to the Infirmities of their Understandings: but for the fondness, and bitter Zeal; the pride, and narrowness; the malice, scorn, and separation, that useth to go with the opinions of Sects; these I confess are very odious, and detestable; and 'tis very hard not to be warmed to Indignation by them: These are Vices, and Immoralities; and a True Catholick, that loves God, and his Neighbour heartily, may, and ought, to manifest his resentments against them, in order to the discountenancing and curing such hateful and deadly evils. Thus of my *Considerations*.

**I** Propose the *CAUTIONS* under the following Heads;

(I.) *Beware of inordinate Admiration, and Love of any Sect*: When we passionately Admire a Party, we are apt to Despise them that differ from it; and to confine the Church to those of that particular way: Hence it is that fond Opinators invest their beloved Congregation, with all the glorious Priviledges, and Titles, making Angels of their own men; whenas for others, they lookdown upon them, as heretical, or carnal, as formal people,



ple, or meerly moral, who are strangers to Gods Grace, and Covenant, and ignorant of the mysteries of Faith and Religion; and therefore they will not defile themselves with their Conversation, nor come into their Assemblies. They look upon the rest of Christians with an eye of pride, and scorn; and affectedly thank God that they are not like these Publicans, these men of the world: They hug themselves in the dear opinion of their own Light; and conclude all others to be in Darkness. They heap up Teachers to themselves, 2 Tim. 4. 3. and doat upon their own Apostles; I am for Paul, or I am for Apollos, or I am for Cephas: This is a pretious man, or that is a Gospel-Preacher; such a one is very Powerful, and such a one is very Sweet, and Spiritual; and O how Beautiful are the Feet of those Messengers of good tydings to them, while they assure them by the Marks of their Sect, that they are Gods Peculiar, and Chosen People!

Which Fondness were not so Mischievous, if at the same time all others were not counted Reprobates and Cast-aways; But this follows, and many other fatal evils: endless Enmities are begun, and Charity is destroyed, and the foundation is laid for Cruelty, and Persecution: and Gods goodness, which is to his whole Church, is wronged by being narrowed, and Christs Blood

is undervalued, and the greatest part of his Purchase is by these men given to the Devil, and Christianity is undermined, and the Peace of Mankind is overthrown: All this we have sadly seen; and I have said nothing here out of any Animosity, or Bitterness; nor have I any design to render any good man, or number of men Odious, or Contemptible; but to represent the Vanity, and the Mischief of this fond spirit, of admiring Parties; which hath been very fatal to Charity, and to the whole body of Religion.

And we shall understand more of the evil of it, if we consider St. Jude's description of the Sectaries of his time, who looked upon themselves as the only illuminated people, and despised all other Christians: These the Apostle describes (1.) by the *groundlesness*, and *vanity* of their conceits; They were *Dreamers*, ver. 8. (2.) by their *insolence* against Government; They Despised Dominion, and spake Evil of Dignities; in the same Verse: (3.) by their *ignorant malice*, ver. 10. They spoke evil of things they knew not; (4.) by their *Cruelty* and *Unmercifulness* to their Brethren; They have gone in the way of Cain; (5.) by their *Murmuring*, and Projecting against their Rulers, ver. 11. And perished in the *gain saying* of Core; (6.) By the *speciousness* of their shews, and appearances; They were *Clouds*, ver. 12. (7.) By their



emptiness, and want of real vertue, notwithstanding their pretences; They were *Clouds without water*: (8.) By their *unconstancy*, and *unsettledness*; They were *carried about of winds*: (9.) By their *violence and fury*, ver. 13. *Raging waves of the Sea*: (10.) By their *eminency*, and *pretended Light*; They were *Stars*: (11.) By the *irregularity* of their motions, and their running up and down; they were *Wandering Stars*: (12.) By their *discontentedness*; They were *Murmurers, Complainers*, ver. 16. (13.) by their *Stubbornness* in the way of their own wills, *Walking after their own Lusts*: (14.) By their *Proud expressions* concerning themselves, and their Party; by their *Canting*, and *Mysteriousness* of their Phrases; *Their Mouth speaketh great swelling Words*: (15.) By their *fond Admiration* of their own People, *Having mens Persons in Admiration*: (16.) By their *Proud Scorn*, they are called *Mockers*, ver. 18. (17.) By their *Separation*, ver. 19. *These be they who Separate themselves*: (18.) By their real *Sensuality*, and self-pleasing, under great Boasts, and pretensions to the Spirit; *sensual*, having not the Spirit. This is the Apostles description of the first *Separatists*, the *Gnosticks*, who admired themselves, and withdrew from the Communion of other Christians, under pretence of greater Holiness: And I could wish they had had no Successors among us; and they

they will have the fewer, if we learn to avoid the undue Admiration of any particular Sect.

My next Caution is,

( II. ) *That you avoid eager, and passionate Disputes*; in these, Charity is always lost, and Truth seldom, or never found: When the Passion is raised, the Judgement is gone; and there is no seeing to the bottom in disturbed, and muddied waters. 'Tis the calm, and quiet considerer that finds Truth, while the hot, and confident disputer loseth both himself, and it; when his passion is once kindled, he cannot speak any thing pertinently himself, nor understand what is spoken to purpose, by another; and so can neither convince, nor be convinced. If thou differ with thy brother then, do not ruffle with him in vehement disputes, but remember the *Apologue*: The Sun and Wind contended for the Travellers Cloak; the Wind bluster'd about him, and endeavoured to prevail by violence; but with this bad success, that the man held his Garment the faster for it: At length, the Sun shines forth with a calm and insinuating beam, which warmed him gently, and caus'd him at last to throw his Cloak from him. If thou art desirous to prevail with thy friend to lay down his Opinion, assault him not by the fierceness of disputes; For such attempts will but raise his passion, and that will make him stick.



stick the closer to his Errour; but shine upon him with a calm light, insinuate thy better principle by modest, and gentle suggestions. He that hath wedded any falshood, hath many prejudices against the contrary Truth; and these are not to be torn off all at once, but softly, and by degrees to be unwound: This is the likeliest way to prevail upon Dissenters; or, if at any time it fails of its success, there is however no hurt done: Charity and Peace are preserved, which are much better, than most Opinions, for which we contend: Whereas by Disputes men are mutually provoked, and tempted to pour forth many Idle, and many bitter words; the quiet and temper of their minds is disturbed, and likely the Peace of others also: They are brought no whit nearer each other, in their Judgements, but put at a much greater distance, in their Affections: Whereas by the other method of calm proceeding all these evils are avoided.

'Tis true, we are commanded to contend earnestly for the faith that was once delivered to the Saints, *Jude 3.* But the Faith there meant, doth not consist in points of doubtful disputation, but in the Fundamental Article That *Christ Jesus is the Messias*, joyn'd with a *vertuous and holy conversation*; and the persons against whom those primitive Christians were to contend, were *Ungodly Men*

Men that denied *the only Lord God*, and our Lord Jesus Christ, ver. 5. For these Essential matters, we may, and we ought to be earnest ; but Contention about lesser things, is called by the Apostle, *Perverse-Disputing*, and reckoned as the effect of pride, and ignorance, 1 Tim. 6. 5. And hence I pass to a Third Caution, which is this,

( III. ) *Beware of Zeal about Opinions* ; by which, I mean all the Propositions of less certainty, or consequence : About these we may, no doubt, be inquisitive and thoughtful ; and our search will be commendable, while we manage it with modesty, and caution, in order to the gaining more Motives, and directions for a vertuous Practice : But to be eager in them, and to disturb the peace of Societies for their sakes ; this is a vitious, and dangerous excess, destructive to Christian Charity, and the publick weal, and order.

There is nothing hath done the world more mischief, than indiscreet, unseasonable Zeal for Truths, while men have not made a difference between those, that are necessary to be believed, and known ; and those others, which may safely be doubted, and denied : 'Tis a great and dangerous mistake to think, that we ought to publish, and propagate all the Truth we know ; For every man thinks his own Opinions about Religion, Gods Truth ; and nature inclines men to desire to  
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beget their own image upon other mens minds; and if this be made a Duty too, every man will be a Teacher of all the rest; and no man will let his brother be at quiet; This man is ready to burst till he hath given himself vent; and the other is as impatient, till he hath contradicted what he hath said: Both are zealous to Profelyte each other, and neither can be contented with a single conquest, till the publick be disturbed. These are some of the effects of opinionative zeal, and we know it by a dear experience. Here is the source of all Divisions, and Sects. Gods Truth is the pretence of every Party, and being enlightened themselves, they all think they ought to enlighten all others; and these Lights meeting, and being infinitely reflected, beget a flame between them, in which all of them are scorched, and Charity, and Peace are consumed.

If therefore we are friends to Christian Love, let us avoid, and oppose this its most fatal enemy; and consider, That we need not be zealous for more truth, than what God hath made necessary; and ought not to be zealous for more, than what Scripture and Reason have made certain; That the Necessary, and certain things are very few, and the remoter doctrines difficult, and deep; That we may easily be deceived in speculative points, where so much acuteness, and freedom,

dom, and care, and diligence is needful; That the greatest part imbrace Shadows, and their Zeal is for folly, and falshood: That our brethren may be good men, though they understand not many things that we know; or err in many in which we judge aright; That the benefits of an Opinion, if true, will not make amends for the trouble, and disturbance, that is made to promote it; and That Charity is more valuable than Knowledge, 1 Cor. 8. 1. 1 Cor. 13.

If we thus Consider, we shall be contented with the satisfactions of our own minds, and not be Angry with others because they will not take us for their Guides; we shall exercise our Zeal upon the necessary, certain things; and our Charity about the rest; we shall inform our brother who needs, or desires it; and let him alone when it may do him, or others hurt to disturb him; we shall propose our Opinions seasonably, and modestly, and be willing that men should receive them, as they can; we shall not be concerned at any mans Mistake, that doth not minister to Vice, and when it doth, we shall prudently, and calmly endeavour to rectifie his thoughts; we shall converse indifferently with all Perswasions without wrangling, and discord; and exercise our Charity, and Good Will towards the Good men of any sort: Thus our Zeal will be rightly

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tempered, and directed, and Charity promoted. And yet further in order to it, I propose this last Caution :

( IV. ) *Beware of censuring, and affixing odious Names and consequences upon the persons or opinions of Dissenters.* He that Censures another, in part Hates him ; and wants many degrees of that Charity the Apostle commends, and describes, 1 Cor. 13. 4, 5, 6, 7. *which beareth all things, hopeth all things, believeth all things, endureth all things.* He that Rails at his Neighbour for his Opinion, wants only power to Persecute him for it : yea, even this is a kind of Persecution ; for there is a persecution of the Tongue, as well as of the Hand ; and He that Injures his Brother in his Name, is a Persecutor, as well as the other, that hurts him in his Body or Estate. Let us take heed then, lest we become guilty by fastning names of Reproach upon those of different Judgement ; and imposing the odious consequences that we our selves make, upon our Neighbour, as his Opinion : Both these are very common, and the Spight, and Injustice of them do exceedingly exasperate our Spirits, and enflame our Disagreements: By this way, Truth is exposed to contempt, and scorn, as well as Falshood ; and there is none so Sacred, but its Adversaries have made it a deformed Vizard, to bring it under the Hatred and Reproaches

proaches of the Ignorant; and that which hath an Ugly Face, is more than half condemned among the generality of men, who cannot distinguish the true complexion, from the dirt that is thrown upon it: This the Zealots of all Parties very well understand, when they run down many things by a Vile name which they cannot Confute by Argument: 'Tis but raising the Cry of *Arminianism*, *Socinianism*, *Popery*, *Pelagianism*, and such like upon them; and all other Refutation is Superfluous: These I mention not out of Favour, but for Instance; and 'tis the like in many other cases.

Thus apt are men to be frightened by Bugbear Names, from Truth, and Charity: And this is Superstition in the true sense, to be afraid of things in which there is no hurt; and it is promoted by the Uncharitable fastning of our own consequences upon our brothers Opinion; This we think follows, and then make no Scruple to say, 'tis his Opinion; when he hates, and disowns it, and would quit his Tenent, if he thought any such thing were a consequence from it: And thus also are our differences heightned, and rendred almost incurable.

If then we have any kindness for Charity and Christian Love, let us take care of such dis-ingenuous practices: A true Catholick should not take any Name to himself, but that of a Christian; nor



Reproach any other with any Style of Infamy. He should not, and cannot in Modesty, or Justice, charge his brother with any Opinion which he will not own, though he never so clearly see that it may be concluded, from what he believes and teacheth. If men would learn to be thus Fair, and Candid, to each other, our Differences would be reduced to a narrower Circle; and there might be some hopes that Peace and Love would revive, and flourish in our Borders.

IF any now should ask me, Whether this Doctrine of *Universal Love* do not tend to *Universal Toleration*? I should answer, that thus far it doth, *viz.* that all private persons should Tolerate each other, and bear with their brothers Infirmities; That every man should allow another that Liberty, which he desires himself, in things wherein the Laws of God, and the Land, have left him Free; and permit him his own Opinion without Censure, or Displeasure: Such a Toleration, I think, Christianity requires in Private men;

But as to the *Publick*, I do by no means think it Modest for Us to determine what the Government should do: And in This case, 'tis as unfit as in Any whatsoever; since this matter depends upon the Consideration of so many Things, that

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'tis very Difficult to state the Bounds of Just Permission, and Restraint: Leaving That therefore to Their Prudence, whom Providence hath called to determine in It; I shall only say, that so much Toleration, as may consist with the Interests of Religion, and Publick Safety, may be Granted: But such a Liberty as is prejudicial to any of These, should not be expected: For Christianity, and all other Considerations, oblige the Government to provide for the Common Good. And were the Duty of Catholick Charity duly practised; and Private Christians once perswaded to Tolerate one another; it might then be safer for the Government to give a Larger publick Toleration than possibly now is fit. In the mean while, without troubling our selves with fantasies about the Duty of our Governours, Let us mind our Own; especially this great one, of Charity and Christian Love: And if we mind this, and practise suitably, God will be Glorified, and Religion Advanced; the Church will be Edified, and our Souls Comforted; Government will be Established, and the Peace of the world Promoted; And the *Peace of God which passeth all Understanding*, will keep our hearts, and minds, in Christ Jesus: To whom, with God the Father, and God the Holy Ghost, be ascribed all Glory, and Worship, henceforth, and for ever.

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S E R M O N III.  
**Christian Loyalty.**

Preach'd on the  
KING'S MARTYRDOME.

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**The Second Edition.**

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Christian Loyalty

THE NEW YORKER

THE NEW YORKER



# SERMON III.

## A FAST SERMON ON THE King's Martyrdom.

ROM. XIII. 2.

— *And they that resist shall receive to themselves Damnation.*

**A**S there are some *Ages* and *Times* that are more infested than others with *unhappy influences* from the *Heavens*, and *noxious reeks* from the *Earth*, which, by poysoning the *Air*, *Roots*, and *Herbs*, convey that pestilential *venome* into mens bodies, that even wearies *Death*, and gluts the

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Grave



Grave with its slaughters, and was matter of our late miseries :

In like manner there are Times when *poysonous* Doctrines from the Pulpit, and *malign* humours in the Populace, infect the *Publick Air*, and spread a fatal Contagion into mens *Principles* and *Manners*, which flies like *Infection*, and destroys like the *Plague*.

And if ever Times were under *cross* and *unlucky Aspects*, if ever there were a publick Spirit of *Phrensie* and *mischiefe* in the World in any days, since the *first* ; certainly this Lot is fallen upon *ours* ; wherein mens *Principles* and *Practises* contend , which shall out-do the other in the degree of Evil: And 'tis hard to say which are worse, Mens actions or opinions.

We are fallen into Times, wherein among some, 'tis a piece of *Gallantry* to *desie* God, and a kind of *Wit* to be an *Atheist* ; among others, 'tis Religion to be *Humorous* and *Phantastick*, and Conscience to be *Turbulent*, and *Ungovernable*. Nor have mens *Practises* come short of the malignity of their *Belief* ; but if possible have out-done it. *Atheism* hath not rested in the judgement, but proceeded to all enormities, and debauches : And we had not been called to the *sad solemnity* of this Day, if *Rebellion* had stopt in *Opinion*.

But

But alas, the *venome* of the *Asp* hath swoln into deadly *Tumors* ; and those *seditionous Principles* have shot their *poysonous* arrows into the *vitals* of the *publick Body*. We yet feel the *smart* of those *wounds*, and the *Generations* to come will wear the *scars* and the *marks* of our *misery*, and our *guilt*.

What is past we may *lament*, but cannot *help*. What we may do, and what we ought, is to inform our selves better of the *Duty* we owe to *God*, and those he hath appointed over us ; and to endeavour the suppressing those principles, and affections which breathed the *Plagues* that destroyed the *Nation*, and would again burn us up in hotter *Flames* than those. And if that *fatal Fire* which so lately prey'd upon our *Peace*, and our *Properties*, our *Religion*, and our *Government*, our *Persons* and our *Friends*, hath not yet convinced us of the evils and danger of *Resistance* ; yet there is another and a greater, one as certain, and more *fatal*, threatened by the *Apostle*, *They that resist shall receive to themselves damnation*.

Which words were spoken in the days of *NERO*, who besides that, he was an *Heathen*, was a *Persecutor*, and a *Tyrant*, and the most infamous instance in *Nature* ; and yet this *Monster* is not excepted as to the *Tribute* of *Obedience*. Whereas had this been said in the days of such a *Prince*



as our CHARLES the First, it might have been supposed that the virtue of the person claimed the reverence and subjection, and not the character of the Prince. And that 'twas damnable to resist because he was Good, not because he was Supream; because he was a Nursing Father of the Church, not because the Ruling Father of his Countrey. 'Twas an happy coincidence therefore to secure the Authority of the Magistrate, which answers the greatest pretensions of Rebellion. If Religion be pretended, an Heathen must not be resisted: If Tyranny, 'tis damnation to oppose a Nero. They that resist shall receive — *Adversus Reges*, the wrath and judgement of God, which implies the guilt, and expresseth the danger.

Now to resist lawful Authority, is so sinful, and so dangerous, principally upon this three-fold account. RESISTANCE,

1. Affronts the Authority of God.
2. 'Tis contrary to the Spirit of Religion. And
3. Destructive to the Interest of Societies.

The two former express the Guilt, and the latter both the Sin and the Punishment. Of each in order.

1. RESISTANCE is an affront to the authority of God. *Idcirco reges barones*, the Lord sets up Kings, saith the Father. And *Ex deo barones*, Kings are from God, says the Heathen. And a greater than

ahán both acknowledgeth Pilate's power to be from above.

The Scripture intitles God to all the Royal adjuncts; and both Christian and Heathen Antiquity agree in this with the sacred Oracles.

1. The Kings person is said to be God's; Great deliverance giveth He to His King, 2 Sam. xxii. 51. and He shall give strength unto His King, 1 Sam. ii. 10. Yea, I have said ye are Gods, saith the Text; and consonantly Plato calls the King, ὁ θεὸς ἐξ ἀνδρῶν, a kind of God among men. And as the name of God is called upon his person, so also is it (2.) upon his Throne. Then Solomon sate upon the Throne of the Lord as King, instead of DAVID his Father, 1 Chron. xxix. 23. And saith the Queen of Sheba, Blessed be the Lord thy God which delighteth in thee, to set thee on His Throne, 2 Chron. ix. 8. To a like sense also is that of Nestor to Agamemnon in Homer,

Λαὸν ἐπὶ ἀναξτὲ τοῦ Ζεὺς ἐστράτευε.

Σκῆπτρ' ἔνδ' ἰδὲ δίμυσε ———.

Jove lent thee thy Scepter and Jurisdiction. (3.) The Kings Titles also relate him to God, viz. those of Gods Anointed, and his Servant: The former given even to Saul, 1 Sam. xii. 3. and Cyrus, Isa. xlv. 1. and the later to Nebuchadnezzar, Jer. xxv. 9. The same also Athanasius gives to Constantius the great Favourer of the Arrians. (4.) The Kings



Kings power likewise is from God; There is no power but of God, and the powers that are, are ordained of God, saith the Apostle. And the Pythagorean, Δίδωκεν ὁ Θεὸς αὐτῷ τὴν ἀρχαίαν, God hath given him Dominion. Upon which account also Themistius, Ἐκ τοῦ Θεοῦ βασιλεὺς ἐτίμηται ὁ Θεός, God sent Regal Power from Heaven. And that a Kingdom is Θεῖον ἀγαθόν, a Divine Good, is the assertion of Plato, and the confession of Cyrus: All the Kingdoms of the Earth hath the Lord of Heaven given me, 2 Chron. xxxvi. Yea, and Tiberius acknowledgeth, Ἐκ Θεοῦ βασιλεὺς ἡμεῖς, our Kingdom is from God. And Daniel minds Nebuchadnezzar, The God of Heaven hath given thee a Kingdom, Power, and Strength, and Glory, Dan. ii. 27. And Athanasius in his Prayer for Constantius, Σὺ τῷ βασιλεὺς ταύτῃ τῷ Διοκλεῖ Κωνσταντίνῳ δίδωκε, Thou hast given this Kingdom to Constantius thy servant.

These, I think, are testimonies enough to prove that Kings wear Gods Image and Authority. And therefore Menander calls the King, Εἰκὼν Θεοῦ ἡμῶν, God's living Image; and the Pythagorean, βασιλεὺς, Θεὸς ἐν ἀνθρώποις παραχμαίττης, The King is the Figure of God among Men. But besides all this, there is evidence enough in the nature of the thing to prove, that Kings have their Power and Authority from God, and are no Substitutes of the People: which I thus infer.

God

God made the World, and consequently the World is *his*, and *his* alone is the Right to Govern it : But *he* being of such immense perfections, that our Frailty cannot bear his immediate converses ; 'tis necessary that *he* rule us by men like our selves, and put the Sword into the hands of Creatures of our own make. This he doth, and hence it follows, that they that Rule are *Gods Substitutes*, and no *Creatures* of the People : For the People have no power to Govern themselves, and consequently cannot devolve any upon another.

Upon the whole I conclude, that the same Commands and Authority that oblige us to obey God, bind us to revere those that so signally wear his *Image* : and he that disobeyes the *Vice-Roy*, affronts the *Sovereign*. *He that resists, resists the Ordinance of God*, saith the *Apostle* ; and *who can lift up himself against the Lords Anointed and be guiltless ?* saith *David* in the case of *Saul*.

And thus I have dispatched the *first*, viz. *Resistance* affronts the authority of God, with which Kings are invested ; as I think I have made evident from testimony, and the nature of the thing.

Secondly, RESISTANCE is opposite to the Spirit of RELIGION : Religion is of a calm and pacifick temper, like that of its *Author*, whose voice was not heard in the street. It subdues our passions,  
and



and governs our appetites ; it destroys our *pride* and *sordid selfishness* ; it allays the *tempests*, and speaks down the *storms* of our natures ; it sweetens our *Humours*, and polisheth the *roughness* of our tempers : it makes men *gentle* and *peaceable*, *meek* and *compliant*. This was the Spirit of the great *exemplar* of our Religion ; this was the genius of his *Doctrine* and his *Practice*.

He commands the payment of all Duties to *Cesar* ; He acknowledgeth *Pilates Power* to be from *above* ; He commands his *Disciples* to pray for their *Persecutors* ; He permits them to *fly*, not to *oppose*. He rebukes *Peters violence* to the *High Priests servant* ; and the *revenge of the Disciples*, when they called for *Fire from Heaven*.

He paid *Tribute*, submitted to the *Laws* of the *Sanhedrim*, and to that *unjust sentence* against his *life*.

This was his temper : and the *Apostles* who lived among *his enemies* and *theirs*, and met with severity enough to have *soured* their *Spirits*, and *exasperated* their *Pens* to contrary resolutions and instructions ; Yet as true Followers of their dear Lord, they faithfully transmit to us what they had learnt from him, *viz.* That we should obey those that have the rule over us ; submit to every ordinance of man ; pray for *Kings* and all in authority ; submit to *Principalities* and *Powers*, and to obey *Magistrates*.

And

And those *Noble Spirits* of the first Ages after, who began to be *Martyrs* as soon as to be *Christians*; who lived in the *Fire*, and went to Heaven wrapt in those *Flames* that had less *ardor* than their *love*: These, I say, amidst the greatest and fiercest *Fires* that *Cruelty* and *Barbarism* had kindled, paid the *Tribute* of a *peaceable* and *quiet* subjection to their *Murderers*, and made unforced acknowledgements of the right they had to their obedience. Nor do we ever read of any attempts they made to free themselves by *resistance*, though (as *Tertullian* saith) they were in powerful numbers mingled in their *Villages*, and in their *Cities*; yea, in their *Castles*, and in their *Armies*. Yea, there is an illustrious instance of *passive obedience* in the *Theban Legion*, whose tenth man being executed for not offering *Sacrifice* to *Idols*, they quietly submitted to the cruelty. And a second *Decimation* being commanded by *Maximinian*, the Author of the *first*, one of their great Commanders, (an excellent Christian) perswades them to suffer it with the same patience: because it was not with their *Swords* they could make their way to the Kingdom of Heaven, but by another kind of *Warfare*.

And now if after all this, and infinitely more that might be said on this subject, for men to pretend *Religion*, and plead *Scripture* for *Rebellion*,

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is impudent and shameless, an affront to Religion, and a Lie in the face of Conscience. And those that cannot discern those great lines of their Duty which are set upon the High places, and shone upon with a full beam, and yet can find sin in little harmless circumstances, which nothing hath forbidden, but the coyness and perverseness of their own fancies; are like him that could see the Stars at noon, but could not see the Sun; and could spy the shadows made by the Mountains in the Moon, but could not discern the greater spots upon its visible surface. And for men to strain at the decency of an Habit, or the usage of a Ceremony, when they can swallow Rebellion and Sacrilege without chewing; is to be like him who durst not eat an Egg on Saturday, but made nothing to kill a Man. Doubtless had the Scripture said by a thousandth part so much for the *Jus Divinum* of Presbytery, as it hath for obedience to Authority; had there been one plain word against Conformity, as there are many against Rebellion; that would have been worn bare upon the tongue, and the World would have rung with it.

But the Injunctions and Commands of Obedience are against our humours and opinions, against the darlings of our fancies, and the interest of our Party: and therefore here we must shuffle, and evade, cogg, and interpret by analogies of our  
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own making, by the Rules of our Sect, and the Authority we worship, by Necessity and Providence, and any thing that will colour Sin, and cozen Conscience, that will turn Religion into the Current of our appetites, and make Scripture speak the language of our humours, and our interests.

Thus Religion and divine Authority shall be revered, and pleaded when they agree with mens fancies, and send light or advantage to the Favourites of their affections: But when they cross their Models, oppose the people of their imaginations, and call them to duties that are displeasing; the case is altered, the great motives of perswasion have lost their power, and influence, and Religion can do nothing with them.

Thus briefly of the two first Heads, viz. Resistance (1.) affronts the Authority of God, and (2.) is opposite to the Spirit of Religion. From which I come to the third, which makes resistance both a great sin, and a great punishment, viz.

(3.) It is ruinous to the INTEREST of SOCIETIES. This I must more largely prosecute, because it will lead us into the sad occasion of our present meeting. Man is a Creature made for Society; and what is against the interest of Societies, is destructive to Humane Nature. And if the greatness of a sin, and a mischief be to be mea-



sured by its reference to the Publick, for ought I know, *Rebellion* will be the next *sin* to that which is *unpardonable*, in the degree of *guilt*, as well as it is near it in the *penalty* threatned.

Now there are two great *interests* of *Societies*, viz. GOVERNMENT and RELIGION, to both which *Resistance* is *fatal* both in the doctrine and practice of it.

To begin with *Government* in order.

(1.) *Resistance* is *destructive* to *Government*: For if *Subjects* may *resist* the *Powers* over them, no *Government* in the *World* can stand longer, than till the next opportunity to overthrow it. Every man will *resist* *what* he doth not like, and endeavour to pluck down what comports not with his humour. Thus every fit of *discontent* will stir up the various, and inconstant *People* to seek an *alteration*: And there was never any *Government* so exactly framed in the *World*, but in the menage, and administration of it, many things would *displease*. Now the generality of men are led by their *present senses*; and if they feel themselves pained by any thing (though the *Grief* be but in their *Imagination*) they are for *present* deliverance from that *Evil* by *any means*; never considering whether the *way* of *Cure* draws not greater *Evils* after it than the *distemper*: and so upon every *discontent* the *people* are *inflamed*, and upon every oc=  
casion,

caſion, rebel. And thus is a *Kingdom* laid open to inevitable deſtroy and ruine : and by a *dear* experience we have learnt, that 'tis better to endure any *inconveniencies* in a *ſettled* Government, than to endeavour *violent alterations*. When the Sword is drawn, no man knows *where*, and *when* it will be *ſheathed* : When the Stone is out of a mans hand, he cannot direct it as he pleaſeth. Men with Swords by their *ſides*, will do what *likes* themſelves, and not what is *enjoyed* by thoſe that imploy them.

Or, could we ſuppoſe (what our own unhappy experience hath confuted) that *Armies* would be obedient ; yet the *Murders* and *Rapes*, the *Spoils* and *deſtroyations*, which are the *natural iſſues* of a *Civil War*, are worſe than any *inconveniencies* in any Government poſſible : And though, as my Lord Bacon notes, *Foreign War* is like the heat of *exerciſe*, good and healthful for the Body ; yet *Civil War* is like the heat of a *Fever*, ruinous, and deſtructive.

Befides, thoſe that *reſiſt*, either overcome the *ſupream Power*, or are *conquered* by it. If the former, their *Inſtruments* in all likelihood conquer them, as well as thoſe they ſerved them againſt : and ſo from the *juſt authority* of their *lawful Rulers*, they fall under the *inſolence* of their *licentious Vaffals*. Or ſuppoſe they get the Government to them-



themselves, all the evils will follow, which usually do upon *Competitions* and *Variety* of *Claims*, which will breed *everlasting disturbance*, and *eternal fears*. Such evils will follow if the *resisters prevail*: and if they chance to be *supprest* and *overcome* by the Powers they oppose, they can expect nothing less than to be *crusht*, and *ruined*. So that those that *resist*, whether they *conquer*, or are *overcome*, draw inevitable ruine upon themselves, and probably on the common Body. For *Laws* and *Government* are the great *Charter* of our *Lives* and *Liberties*, our *Properties*, and our *All*; and as the Father, *καὶ ἀντὶ τούτων οὐκ ἀρξάμεθα οὐχ ὁμιλῶντες*. Murders, rapes, violence, and all kind of mischief invade the World with Anarchy and Disorder.

And how far all this hath been verified in our Land: a little recollection will inform us. For,

**W**HEN fair Weather and a warm Sun, the indulgence of Heaven, and a long tranquillity, had made us fat and frolick, rich and full, our prosperity made us wanton, and our riches insolent. We began to murmur, we knew not why; and to complain, because we had nothing to complain of. Discontents grew upon the stock of our ill Nature, and the perverseness of our humours; and every little occasion was Fuel to the Fire that was kin-

kindling in the distempered Body. We began to invade the Government with malicious whispers, and private *Preachments*, with *Libels* and *Declamations*, with *Insolencies* and *Tumults*: And when *Sedition* had encouraged it self by *Noise* and *Numbers*, by *Popular zeal* and loud talk of *Reformation*, it flew into the highest irreverences towards the *King*, and the most violent proceedings against his *Ministers*, that the nearest *Trees* being removed, they might have a full *stroke* at the *Cedar*. Nor did things stop here.

The *Sparks* grew into mighty *Flames*, and those *Vapours* into *Thunder* and *Tempests*: The *whispers* of the *Corner* past into the *noise* of a *Camp*; and the *murmurs* of the *Street* into the *sound* of the *Trumpet*. The *Cloud* like an *band*, became a *Magazine* of *Storms*; and our *New lights* set us all on *Fire*. The *Pulpit* sounded as much *War* as the *Drum*; and the *Preacher* spit as much *flame* as the *Cannon*. *Curse ye Meroz* was the *Text*, and *Blood* and *Plunder* the *Comment* and the *Use*.

Thus began our happy *Reformation*: From *Law* to *Licentiousness*; from *Religion* to *Frensie*; from an happy *Government*, to a wretched *Hurry* and *Confusion*: and the *progress* and the *end* were suitable to those *hopeful beginnings*.

God was worshipped with the *Devils Sacrifices*, humane blood and slaughter: and glorified by being  
affronted.



affronted in his *Authority* and his *Laws*. The King was honoured by the persecution of his Person, and murder of his Friends; *submissly* addrest by the civilities of a Rabble; and petitioned in the humble form of Drums, and Granadoes; Welcomed at his Cities, by the shutting of their Gates; and entertained in the Country with the glittering of Swords, and the noise of War: Fought against for his defence; and his life sought, for the preservation of the King.

Thus happy were our Reformers in *twisting* Contradictions, and they would be so indeed, could they reconcile one more, *viz.* That they are the good People and sure Heirs of Heaven; because the Apostle saith, They that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

But we are not yet at the end of the line, the most fatal part of the Story is to come.

Therefore, after ten thousand *butcheries*, and *devastations*, *miseries*, and *disorders*, which cannot be described, but they will in part be felt; *prosperous wickedness* finally prevailed, the friends of Loyalty and justice were scattered, and destroyed: Majesty is made a prey to the sons of a Dunghil; and afflicted innocence falls into the hands of the Hunters: And after He had been *infamously* sold like a Slave, and imprisoned like a vile Malefactor: after He had been *ravisht* from his Friends, *blasphemed* in his name, and robbed of the ensigns of his dignity:

dignity: after *He* had been *toft* up and down from one place to another, according as the designs, and insolencies of his *cruel Jailors* would have it; after *He* had been *mocked* by *Conditions of Peace*, and terms of *Accommodation*, that were never meant; after *He* had made *concessions* to all their Demands, and for the sake of the *Peace and Settlement* of his *Kingdoms*, had granted things that *Subjects* had never the insolence to ask; I say, after these, and a thousand instances of *barbarism*, and *indignity* more; that his *cruel Persecutors* might transcend all examples of *wickedness*; that Generations to come might honour them, as they do that HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE, whereof PONTIUS PILATE was PRESIDENT, and that they might deserve a deeper damnation than that threatened by the Apostle to bare *Resisters*; They summon their SOVERAIGN to their Bar, and try *Him* by a company of Petty-fellows, that called themselves by a great Name: They buffet him with their insolent Taunts, and bait him with the mercenary noise of JUSTICE, JUSTICE, like CRUCIFIE him, CRUCIFIE him; They upbraid him with their own faults, and charge him with the guilt of that blood which themselves had spilt; that they might add the guilt of his to all the rest; which BLACK TREASON, not to be thought on

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without *horror*, nor named without a *tear*, this Day they accomplisht, beyond any *president* of former times, and perhaps the *belief* of the future; contrary to their *Allegiance*, and their *Covenant*, to their *duty* to God, and their *professions* to the People, to the obligation of all *Laws* and *Common Right*.

Therefore let this Day be *darkness*, let the covering of the *blackest Grief* be upon it; because this Day fell a Prince, the *best*, the *wisest*; the most *pious*, most *gracious* that ever swayed these *Scepters*. He fell, and fell by *violence*, and the *violent* hands of his own, who ought to have sacrificed *their* lives to the preservation of *His*: He fell, to the *dishonour* of God, to the *grief* of good Men, to the *scandal* of Religion, to the *shame* of Protestantism, to the *overthrow* of Government, and *ruine* of the Nation. This is a *Lamentation*, and to all Generations it shall be for a LAMENTATION.

But Oh Heavens! oh Providence! must *Vertue* be dethroned, and *Villany* be crowned! must *Victory* and *Success* wait upon *Treasons*, and *Parricides*, while *infamy* and *loss* dogg *Innocence* to the Grave! Must the most *righteous* of Princes be the most *miserable* of Men; and Religion and a good Cause be the only way to be *unfortunate*, and *undone*! Will the *Searcher of hearts* abet *hypocrites*! and Providence lend it

it self for an argument to legitimate Rebellion ! Shall the Pharisee pray, and prosper ; and the righteous cry, and be forsaken ! Shall Treason carry Religion in Triumph upon its gilded Banners ! and shall the wicked lift up their hands in an appeal to Heaven, and bring them down to the destruction of the Just ! Shall Villany raise its head to the Clouds, and meet no Thunderbolts there ; while the Devotions of the Innocent return upon him in storms and flames !

Thus Sense and Nature would complain on this occasion : But Providence is just, though we are blind. Prosperous Villany crows and triumphs for a moment, but is covered with shame, and eternal darkness in the issue : The end of things will disentangle Providence, and rectifie all disorders. Then shall we see that afflicted Vertue shoots up on the other side the Grave, and sends its branches into a flowring Paradise, where they shall be green and verdant in an eternal Spring, while every Tree that Vertue hath not planted shall be rooted up, and wither in a moment.

This briefly I thought fit to suggest as an Apology for Providence ; lest the successes of the wicked, and misfortunes of the Just, in instances so great and so near, might tempt any to think, that there is no G O D that judgeth in the Earth.



And thus I am arrived at the *first* period of the *miseries* that we brought upon our selves by *Resistance*, which concludes in the *ruine* and *dissolution* of *Government*, and this runs into all the mischiefs to which humane Nature is obnoxious. For *Government* is the great interest of mankind ; that which bounds our *passions*, and secures our *rights* ; prevents *confusion*, and that *deluge* of *Debauches* that *Anarchy* lets in upon the World. And how far we felt this also in the consequent Calamities, would be considered.

When the Nation then had lost its *Head*, and its *Glory*, 'twas turned with its *Heels* upwards, and governed by a *Thing* as *infamous* in its quality, as its *Name*. The *Dreggs* of the *Populace*, the *Creatures* of a *Sectarian Army*, the *worst* part of a *Body*, that was *bad* enough in its *best* ; these were our *Senators*, and our *Patriots*, the *preservers* of our *Peace*, and the *Keepers* of our *Liberties* : and keep them they did, but not for us, but from us. And was not this a *Liberty* worth the *Bloud*, and *Treasure* that was spent to purchase it ?

O the *blessed Reformation*, that filled our *Pulpits*, and emptied our *Purses* ; that quickned our *endeavours*, and inspired our *zeal* ; and that was so *glorious* in our *mouths*, and so *pleasant* in our *hopes* ! Were not  
all

all miscarriages of Government well mended, when Government was thrown up by the roots? and was not the disease well cured, when the Body was destroyed? Were we not well freed from evil Counsellors, when we made Kings of the worst we had? And was not Tyranny well extirpated, when we were under an Army of Tyrants?

But the glorious things are to come, and we must be cast into New Models: And when the Birds of Prey have divided the Spoil, and satisfied the cravings of their appetites and ambition, the Nation shall be made happy with New-nothings, and golden Mountains; with Chimera's of Common-wealths, and fine names for Slavery. In the mean while Loyalty must be scourged with the Scorpions that are due to Rebellion: And those that feared the damnation of the Apostle, shall be sure to incur the damnation of the Reformers; and they that would not hazard their Souls, must compound for their Estates.

But when the JUNCTO had run to the length of their Line; that is, as far as their MASTER would permit them; when they were as odious as they deserved, and his designs as ripe as he could wish; then up steps the single TYRANT, kicks them out of their Seats, and BEELZEBUB dispossesseth the LEGION. He engrosseth the prey to himself, and assumes the sole priviledge of compleating our miseries: He  
made



made himself after the *Image* of a *King*, and invested his *Sword* with the *authority* of *Law*: He ruled us with the *Rod* of *Iron* we *deserved*; and made us feel a difference between the *silken Reins* of a *lawful Authority*, and the *heavy yoke* of an *insolent Usurpation*.

And when *Providence* had freed us from this *Plague*, and called him to *account* for his *Villanies*, we fell back into our old *disorders*; we reeled to and fro, and staggered like a *Drunken man*, and were at our *wits end*. We knew not *this week*, who would be our *Lords* the *next*; nor did our *Lords* themselves know to day, by what *Laws* they would *Rule* to *morrow*. *Confusion* was in their *Councils*, as well as *Tyranny* in their *Actions*; and there was but *one thing* they seemed to be agreed upon, which was to *enslave* the *Nation*. And if we would not believe that this was *Liberty*, we must be *knockt* on the head with our *chains*; if the *Sheep* would not take the *Wolves* for their *Guardians*, 'twas fault enough, and good reason why they should be *devoured*.

And were not things come at length to a good pass, when men in *Buff* durst proclaim themselves the only *Legal Authority* of the *Nation*? when our *Armed Masters* murdered men in the *Streets*, and threatened the *ancient Metropolis* of the *Nation*, with *Gunpowder* and *Granadoes*? *Fire* and  
Sword

Sword must be our portion, if we would not be in love with infamous *Usurpers*; and a worse Powder-plot than *Faux's* was acting in the face of the Sun: The strength, the riches, the beauty, yea, the almost All of the Nation was designed a Sacrifice to the rage and revenge of our Oppressors; and Plunder and Massacres were almost the least evils we feared.

Thus were we tost up and down from one wave to another, and made the sport of the proud and insulting billows, till Almighty Goodness settled us again upon our old basis, and by a Miracle of Providence restored us our PRINCE and our Government which our sins had deprived us of, to re-establish us upon the sure Foundations of Righteousness and Peace.

These are some sprinklings of that deluge of Woe that we brought upon our selves by resistance, which I have briefly described to this purpose, that the remembrance of these miseries may beget a sense of our sins, and the truth of the particular Proposition I have been discoursing under this Head, viz. That Resistance is fatal to Government.

And though Government may be fixt again upon its Foundations, and Laws turned into their ancient Channel, after the violence they have suffered; yet they lose much of their reverence and strength by such dissettlements: And the People that have rebelled.



rebelled once, and *successfully*, will be ready to do so often. As *water* that hath been *boyled*, will boyl again the sooner.

And thus we see how ruinous *resistance* is to Government, and how destructive to that *first* great Interest of Societies, as it is also,

(2.) **T**O RELIGION, which is the other. That *Rebellion* is contrary to the Spirit of Religion, we have seen; and consequently, that 'tis destructive of its Being, will not need much proof; since contraries destroy one another. *Rebellion* lays the Reins on mens necks, and takes off the restraints of their appetites; it opens the flood-gates of *Impiety*, and lets loose the brats of extravagant Imagination: It destroys the reverence of all things sacred, and drives *Vertue* to Corners: It gathers mens lusts into a common storm, and fills all things with Chaos and confusion. Religion cannot be heard in the noise of a battel, but is trampled under-foot in the hurry and tumult. Faith and love, humility and meekness, purity and patience are overcast and silenced by *Atheism* and Cruelty, pride and barbarism, lust and revenge. Thus *Rebellion* by breaking up the foundations of the Earth, lets in an Hell upon us, and brings a kind of present damnation upon the World. And that this is another fatal mischief of *Resistance*, we have

have felt also by an *experience* that will keep it in our memories. And what execution it hath done upon *Religion* must be considered next.

But this is a *tender thing*, and I am willing to keep my self within bounds that are *charitable*, and *sober*; and therefore must *promise* to what I have to say about it; that I charge not the whole *Body* of the People of the late Times, with the guilt of all the *Follies* and corruptions I describe. Nor do I *believe*, or *say*, that the whole *Mass* of their *Religion* was so monstrously vitiated, and depraved. I profess *Universal Charity*, and have perhaps, more for the worst of them, than they generally will own for any that are not of their own party, or opinion. And therefore at present I shall say no more, than what the sober and intelligent among themselves will acknowledge to be justly chargeable upon some or other of the *Sects* bred by our late *Disorders*; and this will be enough for my purpose, which is only to prove by near and deplorable instances, that *resistance* brings *mischiefs* upon *Religion*; and not to expose to *hatred*, or *contempt* the persons of any that are *serious* in the way of their *profession*, though I judge it never so *obnoxious*, and *mistaken*: And having said this out of a *tender charity*, that none may be wronged by *misinterpretation*, nor any offended that are not concerned; I come with freedom to describe some of the



*injuries our unhappy resistance hath done Religion, notwithstanding that both Arms and Tongues so highly pretended its defence.*

And indeed men fought for Religion till they had destroyed it; and disputed about it, till they had lost it. Multiplicity of Opinion had quite confounded the simplicity of Life and Faith; and 'twas most peoples business to chatter like Pyes, rather than to live like Christians, or like Men. If Religion had been computed by mens talk, and dispute about it, those later days of the declining World had been its best; and this in its growth and ways of highest improvement, when all things else were verging to their Set, and Period. But alas, the Tongue was the most, if not the only religious Member. And many of the Pretenders, like the Egyptian Temples, were fair without, but Beasts and Serpents, and Crocodiles within. Or like the Bird of Paradise, they had Wings to flye in the Clouds of Imagination, but no Feet to walk on the Ground of a vertuous practice. Yea, some had found the way to swim to Heaven in the Current of their appetites, and to reconcile Covetousness, Rapine, Cruelty, and Spiritual Pride, with the glorious names of the Elect, the People of God, the Church of Christ, and the good Party: Religion with Rebellion; and Sacrilege with Saintship. Men had learnt to be godly, without goodness; and Christians without Christianity.

They

They were lovers of God, and yet haters of their Brother : haters of open Prophaneness, but not of spiritual wickedness : Very godly, though cruel, and unjust : True penitents, though they returned to their sins, as soon as they had complain'd, and wept : Their hearts were good, though their actions were dishonest ; and they had the root of the matter in them, though that root were a dry stump, and had no branches : They were regenerated, but not reformed ; converted, but not a jot the better : Devout Worshippers, but bad Neighbours : Lovers of God, but no haters of Covetousness : Had power in Heaven, but none over themselves : They were Gods Servants, though they obeyed their appetites ; and his children, though no better than those, that are of their Father the Devil. Thus had men got the knack to be religious without religion, and were in the way to be saved, without salvation.

These were gross disorders whereby Religion was taken from its foundation of Vertue, and Holy living, and placed in emotions, raptures, and swelling words of vanity.

And when these had kindled the imagination, and raised the fansie to the Clouds, to flutter there in mystical non-sense : and when that was mounted on the Wings of the Wind, and got into the Revelations to loosen the seals, pour out the vials, and phantastically to interpret the fates of Kingdoms ; when it flew into the



the Tongue in an extravagant ramble ; and abused the Name and Word of God, mingling it with *canting*, unintelligible babble : I say, when the diseased and disturbed *phantasy* thus variously displayed it self, many made themselves believe that they were acted by the Spirit, and that those wild agitations of sick Imaginations, were divine motions : And when this fire was descended from the *phantasy* to the affections, and these being exceedingly moved by those vain and proud conceits, caused tremblings, and foamings, convulsions and ecstasies in the body, (all which are but natural diseases, if not worse ; and just like those odd ecstasical motions of the Devils Priests when they came foaming from his Altars) these, I say, the wild phantasticks had learnt to ascribe to the blessed and adorable Spirit : And when their *phantasies* being full of turgid notions, and their bodies in an ecstasie, they dream'd of strange sights, voices, and wonderful discoveries, which were nothing but the unquiet agitations of their own disordered brains : These also were taken for divine Revelations, and the effects of the Spirit of God, shewing it self miraculously in them.

Briefly, and in sum ; Every humour and phantastick unaccountable motion, was by some represented as the work of that Spirit, to which they are most opposite : Thus when warm and brisk sanguine presented a cheerful Scene, and filled the imagination with

with pleasant Dreams; these were divine Illapses, the Joys and Incomes of the Holy Ghost: When heated Melancholy had kindled the busie and active phansie, the Enthusiast talks of Illuminations; New Lights, Revelations, and many wonderful fine things, which were ascribed to the same Spirit: and when Phlegm prevailed, and had quencht the phantastick Fire, rendring the Mad man more dull and inactive; then the Spirit was withdrawn, and the man under spiritual darknes, and desertion: And when again Choler was boyled up into rage and fury against every thing that was not of the Fanatique genius; this also was presumed to be an Holy Fervour kindled by that Spirit, whose real Fruits are gentleness, and love.

And now, after that which I have said on this occasion, it may perhaps be necessary to add, that I hope none here will be so uncharitable, or so unjust, as to think that I go about to disparage the Spirit of God, and its influence; which (as I ought) I adore and reverence: and because I do so, I think it fit to represent, and shame the blasphemous abuses of it, which would expose the most Divine things to scorn, and make them ridiculous. And that the Holy Spirit hath been thus traduced and injured, and is still by great numbers among us, 'twould be shameful not to acknowledge: And I add, that my zeal and reverence for the realities, make me  
thus



thus justly *sharp* against the *Counterfeits*. Nor do I think that *folly* and *phantastry* is to be spared, because they wear the *stollen Livery* of things *venerable*, and *sacred*.

Therefore, to go on; Such a Religion had the corruption of it bred among us: A Religion conceived in the *Imagination*, and begot by *Pride*, and *Self-Love*, which gilded the *Professors* of it with all the *glorious names*, and *priviledges* of the *Gospel*: And when they had encircled their *Heads* with their own *phantastick rays*, and swoln their *Imaginations* into a *Tympany* of *ridiculous greatness*, they scornfully contemned all but their *Darling-selves*, under the notion of the *Formal*, the *Moral*, and the *Wicked*: and proudly pitied the *poor* and *carnal World*, that is, all that were not of their *conceited pitch*, and *elevation*. And having thus *dignified* themselves, and *debased* others: they herded together, drew the *Church* into their *little Corners*, and withdrew from the *communion* of others, who had less *conceit*, though more *Christianity*. They bid us *stand off*, lest we should have polluted them by our *unhallowed approaches*; and having made us as the *Heathen* and the *Publican*, they cried, *Come out from among them*. The true *Church*, *soundness* of *Judgement*, *purity* of *Doctrine* and of *Worship* (if men would believe them) was confined to their *clans*, just as they were to the *Corners* of *Africa* of old, when

when their Friends the *Donatists* were there. Thus did the Votaries of each Sect swell in their *Imaginations*, till some other sort as well conceited as themselves, endeavoured to take their *Plumes* from them, and to appropriate those glorious *prerogatives* to their own party.

And this went for the *power* of *Godliness*, and the *spirituality* of *Religion*, under pretence of which, all reverence to things sacred was destroyed. For when this Spirit had got into the *Pulpit*, and set up the Cry of the *Purity*, and *Spirituality* of *Worship*, it never left canting on the Subject, till mens *Tongues* and *Minds* were fired against every matter of *decency* and *order*, as *formal*, and *Antichristian*: And so far had it prevailed, as to drive those of *warm affections* and *weak heads*, from all *external Reverence* to *God*, and *Holy things*: And the well meaning people being frightened with the terrible noise of *Po-pery*, *Superstition*, and *Antichristianism*, (words they had learnt to hate, though not to understand) boggled and flew off from every thing their *furious* Guides had marked with these *abhorred Characters*, though it were never so *innocent* and *becoming*. And thus a *rude* and *slovenly Religion* had made its way into the *World*, and such a *sordid carelessness* in matters of *divine Worship*, that should a *Stranger* have come into the *Assemblies* that were acted by this Spirit, he would not have imagined what they had



had been doing : and that they were about *Holy Offices*, would perhaps have been one of the last things in his Conjecture. Thus *bold* and *sawcy* talk had crept into mens Prayers, under pretence of *Holy Familiarity* with God ; nauseous impertinent *Gibberish*, under the notion of *Praying by the Spirit* ; and all kind of *irreverences* in external demeanour, under the shelter of a pretended *spiritual Worship*.

Men had subtilized Religion, till they had destroyed it, made it first *invisible*, and then *Nothing*.

A N D now it being thus multiplied, corrupted, and debauched ; being made the *Game* of the Tongue, and the *Frolick* of Imagination ; phantastick in its principles, sordid in its practices ; separated from the foundation of a *vertuous* life, and made to serve the ends of *Pride*, and *Avarice* ; what was like to follow, according to the nature and order of things, but *Atheism* and contempt of all Religion ? And when one says, *here's Religion*, and another says, *there's Religion* ; a third will scornfully ask, *where's Religion*, and *what's Religion* ? When the *Heathen Deities* were so multiplied, that every thing was made a *God* ; *Protagoras*, *Diagoras*, and others, first began to question, and next to affirm that there was *NONE*. Religions have been multiplied in our days, as much as *Gods* in theirs ; and we have seen much of the same

same fatal event, and issue. *They made their Gods contemptible and vile, by deifying things that were so, and we had no less detracted from the credit of Religion, by bringing it down to things of the lowest and vilest rank and nature: Our Idolized Opinions were no better than their Garlick and Onions. The diseases of the Mind, Phrensie and Enthusiasm, which our days have worshipped, were no better than those of the Body which they adored: And they never raised Altars to worse Vices than REBELLION, FRAUD, and VIOLENCE, which our Age hath hallowed and made sacred. So that notwithstanding all the glorious pretensions of those Times, Religion was, among many, taken off all its Foundations, and the World prepared for Atheism. The Follies and Divisions of one Age, make way for Atheism in the next.*

Thus also briefly of the Condition of our RELIGION.

**A**ND thus I have shewn how much RESISTANCE of the Authority that is over us, is against our DUTY and our INTEREST. The former God hath plainly told us, and the latter we have sadly felt.

It remains that we humble our selves under the sense of the publick guilt, as well as complain of the consequent miseries. That we may not draw down



new judgements, by repeating old provocations; and adding our particular sins to the common score. And I think we shall do well to consider, what we, who abhor Rebellion, have contributed to the fatal evils that followed it. We can perhaps be well enough content that the *visible actors* of those mischiefs should be *lasht*, and *exposed*; and it may be, are well pleased and tickled with our reprehensions in which we think our selves not concerned. But if we will be *just*, if we will have this *Fast* to signifye, we must turn our reproofs upon our selves also, and with grief and shame acknowledge that our sins and Debauches, our contempt of *God* and scorn of *Religion*, have helpt towards the plucking down that sad judgement upon the Nation, which we lament this Day: And it must be confest, that there were those that fought *against* the KING, who yet spent their *blood* in his *service*: and many by their *vices*, endeavoured to engage Heaven against that *Cause*, which themselves strove in another way, to less purpose, to promote. And therefore we ought not to think, that this *Fast* is appointed to *inveigh* against the *faults* of others, and to make *them* and their *actions* odious; but to humble our selves under the apprehension of our own, and to teach us to shew our love to the *King*, and *readiness* to obey him, by *subjecting* our selves first unto *God*, whose *Vice-gerent* HE is. And we may be assured

red that they that are not *Loyal* to the U N I V E R S A L L O R D of all the World, can scarce possibly be so to their *particular* S O V E R E I G N. And 'twill need a great deal of Charity to help us to believe, that those who make no scruple to *blaspheme* the Name of God, and to break the plainest, most earnest, and most expresse of his *Laws*, will be withheld by considerations of *Duty* or *Conscience* from *rebelling* against their *King*, or affronting *His*, when there is any powerful interest to oblige them to it. If therefore we would give any evidence of a serious *humiliation* at present, or any security of a future *loyalty*, let us do so by confessing our particular sins, and forsaking them; and then there will be hope that the *Authority* of God may oblige us quietly and peaceably to submit to his M I N I S T E R; and in doing so we shall be blest with his *influence*, and deserve his *protection*. And thus demeaning our selves like *Professors* of the Gospel of Peace, and *Subjects* of the Prince of Peace, the Peace He left with his Disciples will be with us here, and *everlasting* Peace will encircle our heads with rays of glory in the Kingdom of Peace. And so the Peace of God which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in *Christ Jesus*: To whom with God the Father, and God the Holy Ghost, be ascribed all Glory, Honour, and adoration henceforth and for ever. Amen and Amen.

B. b. 2.

S. E. R.





S E R M O N I V.  
T H E  
S I N and D A N G E R  
O F  
S C O F F I N G  
A T  
R E L I G I O N.

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*The Second Edition.*

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SERMON IN

ST. ANDREW'S

CHURCH

RELIGION

THE END OF THE



SERMON IV.  
 AGAINST  
 SCOFFING  
 AT  
 RELIGION.

2 P E T. III. 3.

— *There shall come in the last days Scoffers, walking after their own Lusts.*

**I**T is a question that hath much exercised the wits of the Curious, *whether there be any decay in nature?* or whether all things are not still, as they were from the beginning, in all their kinds, and in all the degrees of their vigour, and perfection? I shall



shall not undertake to determine ought in this Theory; Be the matter how it will as to the *natural* world, we have cause to believe, that there are *degeneracies* in the *moral*: This our Saviour supposeth in the Question, *Luke 18. 8. When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on earth?* Implying, that in the *last Times*, there shall be remarkable fallings from the Faith, and a general Reign of unbelief; which cannot be without great defection in manners also. And St. Paul, *2 Tim. 3. 1.* tells us, That the *last days* should be *perillous*, that men should be *Lovers of their own selves, Covetous, Boasters, Proud, Blasphemers*; and our Apostle in the Text,

----*Scoffers, walking after their own lusts.*

Now we are not to think, that the holy Writers suppos'd, that *these* evils were not in *other* days, as well as in the *last*: No, the same catalogue of Vices runs through all Ages, which more, or less, are infected with them: But the meaning, I conceive, is, That in the *latter*, they should be more *notorious*, and more *numerous*, acted in higher degrees of impudence, and with more circumstances of guilt. There is no doubt but there were always *scoffers*; but never *such*, nor so many, as in the *last days*; (The *last* of the world *simply*, and not only those of the Jewish State), *scoffers, walking after their own lusts*--- viz. as absolute

lute *slaves* to their Appetites, and Passions. For the word **Lusts**, takes in all unruly desires, and inclinations.

In treating of the words I shall shew,

1. What sort of Scoffers we may suppose here meant?
2. What is the evil and malignity of the humour?
3. What are the consequences, and effects of it? And thence
4. Pass to improvement for practice.

**F**OR the **Text**, *Who are the scoffers meant?* I take direction in it, from the character annext, *Scoffers, walking after their own lusts.* Now the lusts of men would be boundless, and are impatient of any check, or stop: They hate all restraints that are laid upon them; and the greatest restraints of appetite, are from Religion: Religion hinders men most from walking after their own lusts, and *these* are most resolv'd on *that*: so that we may suppose the scoffers in the Text, *who walk after their own lusts*, to be scoffers at Religion, which would hinder and disturb them most in that course. And that they were *such*, appears from the following verse; in which they argue *scoffingly*, against the Christian belief, and expectations: Saying, *Where is the promise of his coming?*



for since the Fathers fell a-sleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning --- vers. 4.

Now generally the *less impudent* sort of finners endeavour to *reconcile* Religion to their Lusts, by walking in some of the *forms* of godliness; so did the *Pharisees* among the Jews, and divers *Heretics* among the ancient Christians; and their modern successors do the same still: But there are an *other sort*, who are more bold, and impatient, they will not give themselves the trouble of *reconciling* Religion to their Lusts, but take the shorter course of *opposing* it, in favour of them. This some do by ingaging their parts, and knowledge, gravely, and seriously to *reason* it out of the world; but these are the *few*: Reason is a *severe* thing, and doth as little comport with mens Lusts, as Religion: And the same Lusts that make them willing to reason against Religion, make them incapable of it: For *debauchery* is almost as great an enemy to mens *intellectuals*, as to their *morals*.

And therefore *others*, and the most, go an easier way, and fight against Religion by *scoffing* and *buffoonry*: This is the game the Devil seems to be playing in the present Age. He hath tryed the *power* and *rage* of the *mighty*; and the *wit*, and *knowledge* of the *learned*; but these have not succeeded for the destruction of Religion. And therefore

fore *now* he is making an experiment by an *other* sort of enemies, and sets the *Apes*, and *Drollers* upon it. And certainly there was never any *other* Age, in which sacred and serious things have been so rudely, and impudently assaulted by the prophane abuses of *Jesters*, and *Buffoons*, who have been the *contempt* of all *wise* Times, but are the *darlings*, and *wits* of *these*.

O the Invention! the rare invention of this happy Age! How easie hath it made the way to this glorious reputation? 'Tis but laughing gracefully at the *Fopps*; the *grave*, the *learned*, the *religious* *Fopps*; and a man cannot fail of being a *Wit*, in spight of ignorance, and impertinence. Away with the pedantry, and dull formalities of former days! we are *Wits* upon terms more generous, and more easie. Our Age hath more *spirit* and *flame*: our *conversation*; yes! our *virtuous* conversation hath *refined* and *improved* us; We see the folly and ignorance of our fore-fathers; and laugh at the *Tales* with which crafty *Priests* abused their easiness, and credulity. *Spiritual substance!* *Immortal souls!* *Authority of Scripture!* **Fictions, Ideas, Phantomes, Jargon:** Here is *demonstration* against the *spiritual* Trade, and *spiritual* men. The rest of the work is for *Songs* and *Plays*; for the wit and humour of agreeable conversation.



Thus far we are come, and the infection spreads; so that there is scarce a little *vain Thing* that hath a mind to be *modish*, but sets up for a derider of God, and of Religion; and makes a scoff of the most serious thoughts, and profession of the *wisest* men of all Ages. *Heaven* and *Hell* are become words of sport: and *Devils* and *Angels*, *Fairyes* and *Chimera's*: 'Tis *Foppish* to speak of Religion, but in *Railery*; or to mention such a thing as *Scripture*; except it be to *burlesque* and deride it.

'Tis *dreadful* to consider, and a man may tremble to describe this *monstrous* humour of many in our Age, which I believe hath out-done *all former* in the heights of this *amazing* sort of wickedness, and sadly proves that in the *last* days shall come *Scoffers*, and *such* as have not been from the beginning: For though former Ages, no doubt, have had deriders of Religion, yet in *those* times they *hid* their heads, and did it covertly behind the curtain; in their *privacies*, and among their *Confidants*; But in *these*, they face the Sun, and impudently vent their folly in all companies, and places, as if it were a matter of renown and glory, and they expected to be counted *Hero's* for it.

Thus we see what sort of Scoffers they are that are to come in the *last* days, impudent deriders of Religion,

gion, because they are resolved on walking after their own Lusts. I come,

II. To shew the malignity, and aggravations of this humour.

I. 'Tis an open defiance of God, and a direct opposition of his Glory. His glory, namely the derivative, consists in those praises, and acknowledgements that are due to his perfections; and those are paid in the exercises of Religion; so that to buffoon this, is to shoot the arrows of our scorn directly at the Throne of God. Indeed all sins are oppositions of him, and of his Glory, but in most, they are so in the consequence of the sin, not in the intention of the sinner: The Drunkard, the Oppressor, and the unclean person, design only their own satisfactions, not any immediate affront to their Maker: But the Scoffer with prodigious impudence doth that. He derides the love and obedience, fear and reverence of the most High; which is a direct contempt of his perfections.

Now scorn is one of the greatest indignities; especially, it is sore and provoking, when one is contemn'd by his inferiours; and more, when they are his dependants, that have their bread from his Bounty: such is the case here, in all possible degrees of aggravation; vilest worms and lowest dust, scoff at the highest Majesty, and fullest perfection:



fection: The *universal King* our Sovereign, before whom Angels *bow*, and Devils *tremble*, is derided by the *slaves* of his Kingdom and Creation: The general *Father* and *Benefactor* flouted by those that have their Being, and all their comforts from his goodness, and cannot *live*, or *move*, or *breathe* without him, *Acts* 17. 28. Instead of lowest reverence, gratitude, and prostrations, they lift up their heads in proud scorn and defiance of him; and as the Royal Psalmist speaks of them, *Psal.* 73. 18. *They set their mouth against the Heavens.*

2. *This is a sin that is a step beyond Atheism it self.* 'Tis greater impiety to say, God is a *careless*, or a *contemptible* Being, than to say, *He is not*. As the Moralist tells us, He would rather it should be affirm'd, that there was *no such man* as *Plutarch*, than that it should be believ'd that there *was* such a man, but that he was a *vile* and *worthless* person.

Now to *deride Religion* while we allow there is a God, is to say by immediate consequence, either that he is a *careless* and *idle Greatness* that heeds not his Creatures; and so *worship* is an *impertinence*: or that he is so *bad*, or so *mean* a Being, that he *deserves* not to be worshipp'd, that is, that we owe him no acknowledgement of his Being, or his Bounty; and which is more,  
that

that 'tis *ridiculous* to pay him any. To deny the existence of God is *gross* and *unreasonable*; but to acknowledge *that*, and to scoff at the expressions of love and veneration of him, is *down-right* madness. So that if the *scoffer* be not an *Atheist*, he is the more *inexcusable* in his scoffing; and if possible, he is *worse*.

3. The humour of deriding Religion is *monstrousness* in the soul: All *sin* is *deformity*, but this is *Horrid*. For a man to have his parts and members misplaced; His legs, suppose, on his shoulders, his eyes in his neck, and his arms growing out of his belly, is *frightful*; but there's a *misplacing* in the soul that is *more ugly*. Man hath such powers given him as *scorn* and *derision*, and while they are exercised against *sin* and *folly*, there is *nothing amiss* in them: But when they are *misplaced* upon *holiness* and *wisdom*, upon the greatest and the purest, upon the most visible, and most universally acknowledg'd perfections; they are then an *excess* of *deformity* in the soul, and such scorers are greater *monsters* than the man that hath horns and hoofs.

4. It is a *wickedness* beyond the degeneracy of Devils. We read that They fought against the Angels, the Ministers of God, Rev. 12. 7. but never that they derided them for their Ministeries. They oppose Gods ends, and interests in the world, but we find



find them not *scoffing* at Him. No, they *believe* and *tremble*, Jam. 2. 19. This *Fear* is not a *ver-*  
*tue* indeed, in those Apostate spirits, and yet it  
proceeds from a *sense*, and *apprehension* of divine  
*power* and *vengeance*: But the impious Scoffers at  
Religion have out-grown *that*, and are more bold  
than all the Legions of darkness. They have so  
little dread of the wrath of God, that by their  
scoffs they endeavour to *provoke*, and as it were to  
*dare* him to pour his displeasure on them: As if  
they had a mind to challenge the field with Him,  
and to try the *reality*, and *force* of his *power* and  
*terrors*.

Thus briefly of the *malignity* and *aggravations* of  
the *sin* of *Scoffing* at Religion: There will be an oc-  
casion of saying more of it in the sequel; I there-  
fore descend now,

III. To an account of some **Effects** and  
**Consequences** of it; and shall confine my self  
here also within the bounds of that, which is  
mention'd as the *character* of these Scoffers in the  
Text—*Walking after their own Lusts*— We have  
seen that mens *lusts* are the ground and occasion  
of their *scoffing*; and I add, that *this* again is a  
cause of the *greater heights*, and boldness of their  
*Lusts*; like Water and Ice they produce one ano-  
ther. Mens *lusts* put them upon *scoffing* at that  
which

which should restrain them; and *this*, through the judgement of God, and the nature of the thing, brings them at last to walk after their lusts in such *obsequiousness* and *intireness*, that they follow them,

1. *Without any check, or restraint upon their Lusts.*
2. *Without power to forsake, or disobey them.*
3. *Without, or with very little, hope of remedy, or deliverance from the dominion, and sad consequences of them.*

These are all *dreadful* things, and *such* as frequently (if not mostly) follow upon the impious humour of *scoffing* at Religion.

As to the *first*, The Scoffers walk after their own lusts, ( 1. ) *Without restraint, or check from the Spirit of God.* This *strives long* with sinners; but it *will not always strive* with them that strive against it, Gen. 6. 3. When men move with their Lusts, as those that are *joyn'd to them*, the holy Spirit will *let them alone*, Hos. 4. 17. And *this impiety*, in the very nature of it, is of all sins most likely to provoke Him to a dereliction of the sinner: Since it is the greatest, most direct, and most intolerable affront of the most High; and if any thing be a *fighting against the Holy Spirit*, a *vexing*, yea a *blaspheming* of Him, This is. Moreover, such a sinner becomes a subject *incapable* of His *communications*. Nothing that is *sacred*



or *serious* makes any impression upon such *whiffing* spirits; 'twere as good attempt writing on the water, or painting with a Pencil on the air, as to think of fastening any *sober* sense upon the *scoffer*. And when it is come to this, that the sinner hath made himself *incapable* of any benefit from the influences of the Spirit, He withdraws his solicitations from *that* miserable person. He will not plough upon a rock, nor sow upon the sands. So that the man hath the advantage now of not being disturb'd in his pursuits by the grand Enemy of his lusts; but is suffer'd to run upon the wrath of God, and everlasting torments without controul from Him.

2. The *scoffer* gets this priviledge also, to walk after his own Lusts, without check from his Conscience. This is an *inward* Judge, that summons, censures, and condemns; and while there is such a Court, and such transactions in the sinners breast, he cannot walk after his lusts in quiet. But the *scoffer* takes a course with Conscience:

1. He debauches it. And,

2. He makes it stupid.

As to the *First*, it may be consider'd, That when He enters upon the trade of deriding Religion, he doth not believe it to be really so contemptible, and ridiculous; only he follows a fashion, and thinks 'tis witty to Scoff at it: But

in

in process of time and practice, his understanding, through the *withcraft* of this *vice*, and the *secret judgement* of God, grows into the very nature and temper of the sin; And he comes *insensibly* at last, to believe *that in earnest*, which he entered on at first in *jest*: and so Satan and his Lusts have decoy'd him into a down-right, *serious* Infidelity. If the *horrid Articles* of impiety and unbelief had been offer'd him at the beginning, in a way of *serious argument*, he would have entertain'd them with some *intellectual detestation* and *abhorrence*: But having a long time droll'd upon Religion, and represented it as *ridiculous*; rather than so much wit and sport should be lost, he is willing to believe it *is so*; and *such a will* quickly draws *such an understanding* to it. But especially the consideration of *full liberty* in his Lusts, *indears* and recommends the opinion to him; and the intellect *so prepar'd* is quickly convinc'd, having so great an interest to incline it; so that *now the foolish mind is darkened*, Rom. 1. 21. and the Conscience made a party with the lusts. It is become *reprobate*, Rom. 1. 28. and given up to *strong delusions*, 2 Thes. 2. 11. The Scoffer now believes his *jest*s as if they were arguments of Reason, and pleads for his lusts, as if they were *actions of virtue*: And thus his Conscience is debauch'd: Or, if he have not proceeded so far as *this*, Yet,

D d 2

2. He



2. He *stupifieth* it at least! There are two main acts of Conscience : to *inform* us *what is our Duty* ; and to *judge how far we do it, or do it not*. And this sort of wicked men deal so with Conscience as to *stupifie both*. For Duty, they think of none ; *who is Lord over them !* and for *reflection* on their actions, they are strangers to it. They follow on with their eyes and thoughts upon their Lusts, but never consider whither the way leads. They pursue sense and appetite, but reflect and think no more than Beasts. *Whither am I going ?* and *what have I done ?* are no questions with them. All the soul and mind they have is employ'd in seeking means to gratifie and please their Lusts ; and while *those* are satisfied, the men are content and quiet, be their actions what they will. They feel no inward trouble, or disturbance from the *greatest villanies* : They can blaspheme the name of God by horrid Oaths every moment ; and *debauch* themselves by *drunkenness*, and vile *sensuality* every day, without the least remorse or sense that any thing is a-miss ; yea, they make sport of their Sin, Prov. 14. 9. and *glory in their shame*, Phil. 3. 19. They live *undisturbedly* in a course of hellish wickedness, and *die* in the same, without any thought or apprehension of Sin, Death, or Judgement. They laugh and debauch themselves into a state *past feeling*, Ephes. 4. 19. and *fear*  
their

their Consciences as with an hot iron, 1 Tim. 4. 2. They are twice dead, plucked up by the roots, Jude 12. dead by nature to the spiritual Life; and now by these vile usages, dead to the moral also. And when they are come thus far, they are freed too,

3. From the Restraints of the Ministers of Gods Providence, the Holy Angels. They are Instruments in the distribution of mercies and judgements, by which God restrains sinners from their Lusts; *Ministring spirits for our good*, Heb. 1. 14. and are perhaps concern'd about us in more things than we imagine; throwing bars a-thwart the way where danger or temptation lies; inwardly and secretly exciting good thoughts and desires, as Satan doth evil ones, and defending us, in many instances, from the power and subtilty of that enemy: But the derider of Religion, who is forsaken of God and Conscience, is also left by These. And that there is such a dereliction of incurable sinners, we may see Jer. 51. 9. *We would have healed Babylon; but she is not healed, forsake her, and let her go.* Spoken, as some of the learned Ancients suppose, by the Presidential Angels; like the voice in the Temple, a little before the last destruction of it, **Let us go hence.** Thus Psal. 71. 9. the Septuagint reads---- *They that keep my soul take counsel together, saying, God hath forsaken him, let us persecute and take him, for there is none to deliver.*



liver him. The good Spirits depart from the incorrigible sinner, and leave him to the evil ones.

Thus of the first dreadful consequence of Scoffing at Religion; the Scoffers are given up to follow their Lusts without restraint. Another is,

2. That they follow without power to leave or disobey them. They follow as Vassals and Slaves; yea they follow as a Beast that is led. Their wills are but the motions of their Lust; their Reasons, but the impure Phantasms and Imaginations that are raised by their Lusts; and their affections, but the various inclinations of their Lusts. So that whatever may be said of the liberty of less degenerate men, these have none.

Our power consists in the aids of the Spirit of God, in the informations, convictions and reproofs of Conscience, and in the offices of kindness we receive from the Ministering Spirits: When these are gone, all our power is gone. So that those reprobate men are dead in sin, Eph. 2. 1. and Sold unto it, Rom. 7. 14. They are led into Captivity, by the Law of sin and death, Rom. 7. 23.

They are slaves, and slaves to the worst of Tyrants, and the worst of slaves: even to him that is held in the chains of darkness, to the judgement of the great day. Being left of God and good Angels, the evil ones take possession of them; on which account they are truly Demoniacs, and those of the worst sort:

fort : they are mov'd and acted by the Devil, as if they had no other Soul. And so,

3. They follow their Lusts with none, or very little hope of Remedy. The condition of the Scoffers (of some of them at least) is quite or very near desperate. This follows from what hath been said already ; and we may consider further ;

1. That there is a day of Grace ; a time in which there is ground for hope : when that is done, hope is at an end. Now this day is the time, and possibility of repentance : When ever a sinner repents and turns, he shall be accepted and live : But men may out-live, and sin away the power and capacity of repentance ; And then their Sun is set, their day is done.

Now Repentance begins in Sense, and conviction of sin ; but when a man is arriv'd at a state past feeling, he is incapable of that : the most powerful word, most terrible judgements, and most alluring mercies have no effect on such ; the best Physick in the world will not work on a dead carcass ; the loudest voice will not rouse a Marble Statue ; nor the most sovereign Salve, close up a cut in the stump of a Tree.

The sum is, When one is past the inward sense of Duty and danger, Sin and Misery, he is past Repentance, Grace, and Hope : And this very often

is.



is the condition of the Scoffer, who hath debauch'd and jested away all feeling of these Interests.

Yea ( 2. ) there is great cause to think that he commits the **Sin against the Holy Ghost** ( or a sin that is very near it ) For that consists in the *Disbelief and contempt of the great and last Testimony that was given by the Spirit, to the truth of Christianity* : And that I may not seem to speak this without ground, let us look into the place where the first and fullest account of this sin is.

We have it *Matth. 12.* Our Saviour had cur'd one that was posselt, *ver. 22.* The people marvel'd, and were inclin'd to believe upon it, *ver. 23.* But the Pharisees revil'd, saying, that he *cast out Devils by Belzebub*, *ver. 24.* Christ shews the absurdity and falshood of their suggestion, arguing that then Satan would be divided against himself, and his Kingdom, so divided, could not stand, *ver. 25, 26.*

And having reason'd against that malicious account of his Miracle, he infers from the contrary, and true way of his performing it, *ver. 28.* If I by the Spirit of God, cast out Devils, then is the Kingdom of God come unto you, viz. then I, that have done this, am the Messiah: And he concludes by a serious application to them to shew the sad consequence of such bold, and impious suggestions,  
*ver.*

31. Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin, and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the **Holy Ghost** shall not be forgiven unto men.

Where by Blasphemy against the **Holy Ghost** must be understood, according to the context, That of imputing the operation of the Spirit in Miracles to the Devil, which is therefore so heinous, because it is an expression of the greatest contempt of it, and a bar against the being perswaded by it.

Now to apply this; Though the Scoffer doth not impute the Spirits Testimony in Miracles to the Devil; yet that is not because he hath a greater esteem of the operations of the Spirit; but because he hath less belief of the existence of Devils. Yea, he will not allow so much as the Pharisees did, That any such things were done; but supposeth all to have been Impostures and delusions in the Author, or cunningly devised Fables in the Relators, which is a contempt put upon the operations of the Holy Spirit, equal to that of ascribing them to the Devil, and doth as effectually and incurably strike up the Grounds of Faith, as that. So that in substance, the sin of the Scoffers is the same with that described in the Text, though differing in circumstance and form. Yea, 'tis the sin with aggravation; since they do not barely speak against the



*Holy Ghost*, and his operations, but deride them: an expression of the greatest contempt possible.

And when men are come thus far, to despise the great Testimony of the Spirit and ground of Faith, after it hath been sufficiently propounded to them, and entertain'd by them, in favour of their Lusts; we have cause to think their *Infidelity* is incurable, and consequently, *unpardonable*. For so the Apostle hath declar'd plainly, *Heb. 6. 4, 5, 6.* For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly Gift, and were made partakers of the *Holy Ghost*, viz. in Baptism, and have tasted the good Word of God, and the powers of the World to come; (all which are expressions of the visibly owning Christianity, and partaking in the duties and priviledges of it) if they shall fall away, to renew them again to repentance. And they that are arriv'd at the impudent height of deriding all this, are *fallen away* with a witness; and therefore, I think, we may conclude safely from the Doctrine of the Apostle, that they are incurable and unpardonable; and from this, and the discourse before, that 'tis sadly probable, they have committed the *sin against the Holy Ghost*.

This 'tis like may seem very severe Doctrine, but I cannot help that: if it be true, I am not to be blam'd for the severity of it.

And

And I'me sure the Book of *Homilies* declares more positively in the case, than I have done : For speaking in the *Tenth Homily*, of the *Scorners of Godliness and Religion*, who are there describ'd; the Author saith of them, [ *I think I may without danger of Gods judgement pronounce, that never any yet were converted unto God by Repentance, but continued still in their abominable wickedness, heaping up to themselves Damnation against the day of Gods inevitable Judgement.* ]

**I** Come now, IV. to the APPLICATION; which shall be ( 1. ) *Earnestly to Dehort* all that have the least sense of vertue, or reason, from *Scoffing at Religion*; or at men for making profession of it. And then, ( 2. ) I shall conclude with some very brief *Directions and Rules of caution*, to secure us from the danger of this Sin.

Concerning the *first*, I consider that the *Scoffers*, with whom I am further to treat, are of two sorts, 1. The *desperate*; who have debauch'd themselves into *down-right Infidelity*: And 2. the *Fashionable* ones, ( as I crave leave, for distinction, to call them ) who do not Scoff at Religion out of *enmity or malice*, but out of *modishness and compli-ance*; and it may be, out of design to be accounted *Wits* for so doing.

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I shall



I shall deal *First*, with the former sort; and in treating with them, shall use none of the acknowledgments of Religion; but from plain unassisted reason, shall shew the extreme vanity and madness of their practice: And I would entreat them to think of the following things.

(1.) Be Religion *True* (as we know) or *false* (as they vainly imagine) their Scoffing at it is exceedingly *absurd*. Every Faculty is to be applied to its proper object: to employ any of them about others that belong not to them is *foolish* and *unnatural*. Now God hath bestowed upon us Reason, and understanding to judge and discourse about things that are *serious*; and the Faculty of laughter and derision to be exercised upon things that are *vain*: to employ the former, and discourse gravely about *ludicrous*, trifling matters is *ridiculous*: And 'tis equally *absurd* to be sportive about affairs that are *serious*.

Now, whether Religion be *true* or not, 'tis a *serious* thing: If *true*, the greatest Interests of *this* world and *another*, are included and concerned in it. Or if it be otherwise, it must yet be granted, that it hath much agreeableness with the Reasons, and most *serious* Faculties of Mankind; and our greatest and most important concerns in *this* Life, *viz.* the main affairs of the Government of the World are bound up with it, and have relation

lation to it : So that whether *true* or *false*, it is no matter of *sport*, but subject for our most *serious* considerations and discourses. And from this last hint about Government, I mind the Scoffer,

2. That his practice tends to the *dissolution* of *humane* Society, and the turning of mankind into the condition of *wild nature* : And if it should succeed, and prevail generally, upon any *whole* people, it would make them more *barbarous* than any Nation in the world ever yet was.

For *be* Religion *what it will*, Government hath *Strength, Security, and Reverence* from it. Take this off, and the fears of it, and no Laws can be put in execution (and without this, Government is a *meer* name, and nothing) For there can be no *assurance* of the *truth* of *fact*; where there is no *restraint* from Religion upon *Lying*, and *false witness* : and suppose but *this*, that there is no *reckoning* or *account* hereafter ; every man may say, and testify, what is for the advantage of his *Lusts* ( for no *humane* Laws can reach him ) and then *Laws* will be *useless*, or *hurtful* ; and all Government will quickly be at an end. For though, as things are under the acknowledgements of Religion, there is much lying, *false-witness*, and *injustice* in the world ; yet let all the *Restraints* of *Conscience* and Religion be removed, and things will be incomparably worse :

No



No mans Life or property will be safe ; mankind would worry and prey upon one another, and we should ere long fall a-sunder into a condition of *dissolution* and *wildness*. So that the Scoffers at Religion are declared *enemies* of *humane Nature*, and strive to turn us out into the state of *Savages* and *Cannibals*.

3. The humour is exceedingly *rude* and *uncivil*. 'Tis *ill manners* to flout and deride what is esteemed by our *Betters* ; especially, if *that esteem* be in the highest degree of *veneration*. Now Religion hath publick acknowledgements of greatest respects from all Ages, and all Nations ; from the Princes and the people ; from the Mighty, and the Learned ; from the best, and the most ; from the deepest Inquirers, and acutest Discerners : So that to Scoff at Religion, as if it were *ridiculous* and *contemptible*, is rudely to *affront* all *these*, and to publish them for a pack of fools and madmen. 'Tis to make *Fopps* of all our *Forefathers*, and *Idiots* of the *Founders* of our *Laws*, and *Government*. 'Tis to *desie* every man we meet (except the Atheist and the Scoffer ) and to proclaim all mankind *besides*, to be a set of *simpletons* and *superstitious Sneaks*.

Let such men quit all pretences to *civility* and *breeding*, they are ruder than *Tories*, and wild *Americans* ; and were they treated according to  
their

their deserts from mankind, they would meet every where with Chains and Strappadoes.

4. To Scoff Religion, is ridiculously proud and immodest: And the scorner supposeth, that he sees more with one *twinkle* of his eye, than the wisest, most learned, and most considering part of mankind have seen in all their most serious and laborious observations.

Certainly if Religion be a deceit, it is not so thin and transparent a one, as to be presently looked through by every *whiffler*, and *swilling Buffoon*. If it is an *Imposture*, 'tis such a one, as hath impos'd upon the wisdom of all Ages; upon all the old World, and upon the greatest part of the present: And be it what it will, it hath made it self very plausible by the helps of reason, and Arts of Learning; and it would be very *Strange*, if after all, it should be detected and made so naked by every one that can laugh, and break a Jest. It would be wonderful if the Mystery hid from Ages, the Grand cheat of Religion, should at last be found out by *Raileurs*, and *Songsters*: That it should so long have been conceal'd from the wise and prudent in all their disquisitions and reasonings, and be reveal'd at last to *Debauchees* and *Jesters*, amid the wild inspirations of Wine and Ale.

Suppose



Suppose the worst; and let Religion be as false and as ridiculous as can be imagin'd: the Scoffers that deride it, are impudent to pretend that They have found it out. They find the folly and falshood of Religion! Let them find new Fashions, or new Oaths (things suitable to their genius and capacities) But for shame let not them talk of discoveries about Religion. Or if they must be meddling here, let them first learn their Catechisms, and know what Religion is: And when they understand what they Scoff at, let them Scoff on if they can.

5. To deride Religion, is a dangerous and unsafe practice. For the Scoffer is not sure that he is wiser than all mankind, that hath reverence for it. He hath no demonstration to prove Religion false and ridiculous: Nor is he absolutely certain, that there is no Immortality or future judgement. So that, suppose it should prove true, at last, that there will be a general day of account; and men shall be summon'd by Christ Jesus to be judg'd according to his Gospel, for a state of eternal happiness, or woe; what is the case of the Scoffer then? yea what will it be at that day? will his mirth hold when the Judge shall appear? or will his Wit recreate and support him when he shall be call'd to the Bar? will he have any heart to droll when the Sentence is past? or will he applaud him-

himself in having made *Hell* his sport, when he feels it? will he shew himself good company among the *Devils* and his *Angels*; or make pastime of *Heaven* and *Religion*, amid the flames of *Brimstone*?

I say, 'tis possible (at least) that what we have heard of a day of judgement, and a future state of *Heaven* and *Hell*, *Angels* and *Devils*, may be real; And if it be, the Scoffer is undone, to *Eternity* undone. So that he is extreamly a fool, to venture so great a stake, as the life and happiness of his Soul for evermore, upon a confidence that may deceive him; yea he doth it upon a presumption that hath not as much as any good probabilities to incourage it. For if *Religion* be not certain, yet most of the appearances lie that way; and no wise man would hazard his soul against such shews of truth: especially, when the gain for which he runs the risque, must needs be very little; and the loss will be infinite and irreparable. If *Religion* proves false, the Scoffer gains the satisfaction of a little merriment and sport; and it may be, of being taken for a *Wit* among his companions; But if it be true, he loseth the vision and enjoyment of *God*, and the eternal happiness and perfection of his soul; he falls under the vengeance of the most *High*, and into the power of *Devils*; under the stings of *Conscience*, and into the pains of *Hell*.

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Now



Now what man in his wits, would run the venture of such fatal losses and miseries, for such trivial *Nothings* of advantage? He were mad, that would stake his *Estate* and *Life* to get a pin or a feather, in a case wherein he could have no assurance; and he were more so, that would do it, when there was odds against him. If there were ten thousand probabilities on the part of *Infidelity* (without certainty) no wise man would lay all his Interests upon it, when no more could be got by it, than the pleasure of a little laughing: But to do it when so many appearances (if they are no more) lie on the other side, is *Bedlam* madness.

I have thus represented to the desperate Scoffer, whose Lusts have made him seriously believe, that Religion is contemptible; that the practice of Scoffing at it, (be it what it will) is very absurd and dangerous.

But there is yet another sort of Scoffers to be treated with, who are not yet come so far, as to believe that Religion is a *Fable*, and yet Scoff at the profession of it out of modishness, and an humour of imitation. They do not in their hearts deny Religion, but yet they deride Those that practise according to it; they are not content to laugh at the fopperies, that many times call themselves by that sacred

sacred name; but flee also, and spend the *silly thing*, they think to be *Wit*, upon those actions that are *undoubtedly* religious: Such never enter into the consideration of the matter, and therefore I shall endeavour to awaken them (that they may know what they do) by the things that follow.

1. *They Scoff at the Religious for acting according to Reason*, that is, because they are men and not bruits: Because they act like intelligent creatures, and not like the *Horse* and *Mule* that have no understanding. They deride them for passing right judgements, and making a right choice: for preferring God before the creature; the soul before the body; and eternity before time: For choosing light before darkness; beauty before deformity; and life and happiness before the extreams of death and misery. God hath given to all his creatures a principle to direct their actions; Reason to Men, and Sense and Appetite to Beasts; so that to deride men for governing themselves by their reasons, and not by inferiour principles, is as absurd, as if a man should laugh at the Ox for grazing freely in the field, and not standing still to grow like a tree; or at the bird, because it flies in the air, and doth not creep like the worm on the ground. He that doth so, is an *Idiot*, and a *Natural*, and the Scoffer acts at the same rate of folly.

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2. Ho



2. He derides men for living by the most Catholick rule of nature, viz. that of Self-love, and self-preservation. He flouts them for seeking health and happiness, riches, honours, and pleasures, the truest and the best: For endeavouring to obtain the favour of God, the peace of Conscience, and security of future and eternal well being: For striving to avoid the snares of Satan, the wrath of God, and pains of Hell. He laughs at them, because they will not thrust their heads into the Fire, and leap the precipice into the gulph of woe: Because they will not be their own executioners, and beat out their own brains.

3. He Scoffs at the Religious, because they act for the great ends of their Being. God made all things for an end, and man for a noble one, the enjoyment of himself for ever: Now the exercises of Religion are the way to this end; and to deride men for this, is to laugh at them for acting, and designing pertinently and nobly. The Scoffer jeers the religious, because he lives for greater ends, than the Beasts; and indeavours to be happier than his horses and his swine: Because he will not be content, only to eat and drink, and revel and die.

4. The Scoffer laughs at the Religious for aiming at the perfection of his nature. God made man perfect, but we have corrupted our selves, Eccl. 7. 29. and

and debased our noble beings: We have destroyed our Makers Image, and deform'd our natures. Now the design of Religion is, to repair our ruines, and to recover us to the integrity, and perfection of our *first* selves; to restore Light to the mind, and vertue to the will, and order to the affections; to heal, cleanse, and beautifie the soul: So that to Scoff at men for living by *this*, is as if one should deride the sick for taking *physick*, and the blind for using a *guide*. As if a man should be scorn'd for *washing*, after he had fallen into a *mire*; or for seeking cure for a foul *Leprosie* that had over-spread him.

5. The *scoffer* derides the Religious for acting according to his own principles. He saith, there is a God, and jeers those that worship Him; he believes that God is infinitely amiable, wise, great, and good; and yet laughs at men for loving his beauty, and believing his wisdom, and trusting in his power and goodness. He saith, that Christ is the Saviour; and derides those that are willing to be saved by Him: that the Holy Ghost is the *sanctifier*; and laughs at *that holiness*. He teacheth and produceth. He will tell you, he believes there is an Heaven of eternal happiness; and scorns those that seek it: that there is an Hell of endless woe and torment;  
and



and makes sport of all endeavours to avoid it.

6. He derides men, because they are true to their engagements and professions. Because, when they have promised to forsake the Devil, and all his works, they are not willing in practice to forsake God, and all his : Because, when they say, *Thy will be done*, they don't resolve to do all they can to cross it: Because after they have pray'd an hundred times, *Incline our hearts to keep thy Laws*, they do not set themselves every day to break them.

At such extravagant rates as these, doth he act, that retains the belief of Religion, and scoffs at the practice of it. And O that they were wise, and would consider this, who so far forget God, and the Reasonable natures he hath given them!

I shall now, II. conclude with some Directions and Rules of caution for security against this grievous folly. And,

1. Let us be in earnest in Religion; endeavouring to understand what we profess; to believe what we understand, and to practise what we believe: And then, we shall feel such a sense of Religion on our souls, as will beget the highest reverence to it, and effectually secure us from any such impiety. For 'tis ignorance, infidelity, and an evil life, that are the great causes of mens contempt of Religion.

2. Let

2. Let us take care, that we place not Religion in uncertain opinions, and vain trifles: Mens superstitious fondness of such, hath expos'd Christianity to much scorn and derision; while its enemies will not, or can not, distinguish between Religion it self, and those fopperies that pretend unto it. This hath been a main ground of most of the contempt that is upon it at this day. There is nothing in substantial, naked Religion, that can afford the least just occasion for laughter, or malicious sport, it being in it self the most reasonable, venerable thing in the world. Let us take care then that we mingle not any thing that is ridiculous with it.

3. When we deride the vanities of error and superstition, let us be cautious, lest we give incouragement, or ground, to others by it, to Scoff at Religion it self; and consider, that the Lusts of men are ready to catch at any occasion to abuse and vilifie their eternal enemy.

4. Let us beware of too much delight in the humour of Drollery and Jesting, expressly forbidden by the Apostle, Eph. 5. 4. This sort of wit, in most, is a dangerous and ungovernable Lust, and spares nothing sacred or serious, when 'tis indulg'd; it makes the Spirit vain and trifling; and indisposeth it for any weighty exercise either  
of



of Reason or Religion, and from the indisposition it produceth to such imployments, 'tis an easie step to the *contempt* of them.

5. Let us not intimately and frequently converse with the people of *this sort*. There is *infection* in such company, and a *secret Witchcraft* in this humour, that may work us insensibly to an imitation of it.

And O that the *Youth* of the present Age, would be perswaded to put a mark upon those men; and to avoid their *dangerous* conversation! Certainly they had better joyn themselves to *Poisoners*, and *Cut-throats*, than to have much to do with those *Factors* for *Damnation*; A Generation so vile, that should Satan send the most malignant spirits of Hell *openly* and *professedly* to trade for him, They could not act with more direct, and declar'd opposition to God and goodness, than these wretched men do. So that one may justly wonder, that they are not shun'd by all sensible men, as *desolation*, and the *plague*: and hooted into their wits; or quite out of them, by an universal contempt, and most deserved scorn. I am sure it becomes all that are of a Gentile, Vertuous, and ingenuous Education, to avoid giving them any countenance or encouragement, by any familiarity of acquaintance; and 'tis a duty they owe to God, their Nation, and their own present and eternal interests.

6. Take

6. Take heed of *speaking lightly of any thing that appertains to Religion*. Sacred things are never to be mention'd but with *seriousness and reverence*: If we toy and play in our discourses with them, though without direct *scorn or malice*, this too familiar use of Divine things, will at last bring us to an habitual disvalue of them, which in time will grow into contempt.

If we direct our selves by such *Rules of caution*, we may, by the Grace of God, escape the *Epidemical* infection that flies almost every where in our days, from the *Scoffers* that walk *after their own Lusts*.

I have thus shewn the *sin, folly, and danger of scoffing at Religion*, and given some *Rules of caution* against it. One would think there should be no need of such a discourse among a Christian people, who have felt so many *Judgements*, and enjoy so many *mercies*, who have the Gospel preach'd to them with so much *power and plainness*, and have made so long and so zealous a profession of it. But is there not a cause for all this? If there be none, I crave pardon for my troubling you so long to no purpose: but if there be, I pray God that we may all lay it to heart, earnestly beseeching him to awaken those that are guilty of this *hainous impiety*, to see their *sin*, and their *danger*, before it be too late; and to divert from them,

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and



and others, the Judgements that such bold heights in wickedness do most justly deserve. That he would in mercy find a way to remove this *vile abomination* and *scandal* from our Land ; and diffuse such an awful sense of Religion through the Nation, as may keep us under the power and obedience of it. That he would make us all *tender* and *zealous* in the things that refer to his Glory, and the Honour of his Religion ; and assist us by his Grace, in all holy endeavours to promote those interests : begging all in the *Name* and *Mediation* of *Christ* our Lord, to whom with the *Father*, and *Holy Ghost*, be all Honour and adoration henceforth, and for ever.

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S E R M O N V.  
THE  
C H U R C H E S  
Prayer, and Complaint  
OF  
C O N T E M P T  
FROM  
PROPHANE and FANATICK Enemies.

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*The Second Edition.*

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SERMON V.

THE  
CHURCH

OF THE

CONGREGATION

OF

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OF

OF




# SERMON V.

## THE CHURCHES PRAYER, AND COMPLAINT.

PSAL. CXXIII. 3, 4.

HAVE MERCY upon us, O Lord! have mercy upon us :  
for we are exceedingly filled with Contempt.  
Our soul is exceedingly filled with the Scorning of  
those that are at ease; and with the Contempt of  
the Proud.

 HE State of the Church in *this* world  
is *Militant*, and *uncertain*; subject to  
those alterations, and vicissitudes which  
attend all things that are of a mutable  
nature. One while, 'tis in a fair and flourishing  
condition; orderly without, and united within :  
beautiful,



beautiful in its external appearance, and more so in its inward holiness and peace: And *then*, its Heaven is overcast, clouds and thick darkness rest upon it: It is overwhelm'd by troubles and disorders; and rent asunder by *Heresies* and *Divisions*: so that the *ways of Sion* mourn, and her *Gates* are *desolate*. In the afflicted state was the Church at the penning of this *Psalm*: whether its afflictions were from the Tyranny of *Antiochus*, the *Babylonish Captivity*, or its *own corruptions*, I shall not here dispute. It may suffice for us to take notice, that the Church was now in great *distress*; and that it took the right way of *remedy*, by applying it self to God for relief:

*Have mercy upon us, O Lord! have mercy upon us----*

In which words we have two parts.

1. A **passionate Supplication**: *Have mercy upon us, O Lord! have mercy----*

2. The **Ground** and **occasion** of it: *for we are exceedingly fill'd with contempt----*

This is *last* in order of words, but *first* in order of nature; and therefore I shall begin *here*, and consider in it:

1. The *matter* of trouble and complaint: it was *contempt* and *scorning*.

2. The *degree* of it: 'twas *exceeding* contempt; and their souls were *fill'd* with it.

3. The *character* of the *persons*, by whom the  
Church

Church was so contemn'd: they were, 1. Those at ease. And 2. the Proud.

1. For the matter of complaint: 'Tis exprest to be Contempt, which consists in a mean and vile opinion of the person contemn'd: and scorning, which may be taken for the shewing of it, in actual derision, and abuse. Now contempt supposeth a mean and low condition, and hatred upon it. For misery moves pity, and not contempt, where there is any thing of charity or kindness. So that at this time the Church was low, and hated in its lowness, both which together, make up the occasion of contempt, and the scorning that was consequent to it. This is one of the most grievous of all evils, exprest well by him that said, *Nihil in se gravius habet paupertas, quàm quòd homines efficit ridiculos.* Want, we may think, is misery enough; but it is aggravated and heightened by the contempt and scorn that usually goes along with it: even the vertues and the wisdom of the poor are despised.

2. We have the degree of contempt exprest. They were exceedingly contemn'd: and exceedingly fill'd with contempt. And their souls were exceedingly fill'd with scorning.

Exceedingly fill'd, glutted with it, 'tis a Metaphor taken from an oppressive repletion of the stomach, even to nauseating and loathing. Their soul was fill'd, the greatest and quickest sense of evil was over-



over-charg'd with *this*, very grievous one.

They are, we see, greatly mov'd and concern'd, and seem to speak, as if there were scarce words enough to declare their trouble: which intimates, that the contempt upon them, was not only from *open* and *Gentile* enemies; for from *Them* it was to be expected, and from *Them* not so much to be regarded. The complaint had been too *soft*, and *unspirited*, if there had been no more in it. If an *open enemy* did them this dishonour, they might have *born* it, without so much expression of tender resentment. 'Tis likely therefore from the *greatness* of their concern, that some of them (at least) were, or had been, pretended *familiar friends*, which some time went up to the house of God with them, and made profession of the same *General Faith* and *Religion*.

The sufferings of the Church and good men, are not only from *adversaries*, and those without: but very oft from *weak, peevish, and mistaken friends*: from those that are *righteous*, and *Orthodox* *over-much*: from the *superstitious* and ignorantly zealous: from those that have more *heat* than *light*; that mean well, but understand little. Such, many times, are *more* troublesome to the Church, than *declar'd* opposers: and Satan useth *them* as instruments of affliction, and disturbance to the wise; as well as the prophane and unbelieving enemy.

enemy. This sort we may well suppose to be some of the *proud* mention'd in the Text : which may be consider'd further under the Third Head, viz.

3. The *Persons* from whom the Church suffer'd this contempt and scorning. 1. *Those* that were at ease. And 2. the Proud. Our soul is exceedingly filled with the scorning of those that are at ease; and with the contempt of the Proud.

1. *Those that were at ease:* the rich and prosperous in the world. Who were inclosed in their own fat; who had their portion in this life; whose bellies were fill'd with hid treasure, as the Psalmist speaks, Psal. 17. Yea, they had more than heart could wish, Psal. 73. and were such, as said unto their Souls, Soul take thy ease, thou hast Goods laid up for many years, eat, drink, and be merry, Luke 12. They were at rest in their enjoyments, and very loth to be disturb'd by the thoughts of leaving them; and more unwilling to consider, that they were to give an account of their Stewardship. So that they must needs look with an evil eye upon Religion, the disturber of their quiet, and have a great mind to say in their hearts, *There is no God*, Psal. 14. 1. and that Religion is but a cunningly devised Fable, 2 Pet. 1. or, if they cannot bring themselves to believe that, they will be apt to say, *Tush God seeth not, he careth not*: or, if He do,

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they



they will not; they endeavour to be as *careless* and as *blind* as they can, and to put him far from them, for they like not to retain God in their knowledge, Rom. 1. And being thus disposed, they set themselves to quarrel Religion, to dispute against it, as far as their wit will give leave; and when that fails, to Scorn and deride it. These envy the Church, while it enjoys any thing of the world with them, and despise it, when they have robb'd it.

2. The Contemners were the Proud; And with the Contempt of the Proud. They are of two sorts, 1. Such as are made so by their riches and worldly prosperity. 2. Those that are swell'd with the conceit of their Knowledge, Spiritualities, and Graces.

For the first, It is an usual effect of worldly fulness. Riches make men haughty and insolent, saith Aristotle in his Rhetorick: And a greater than he, having described the prosperity of the wicked, adds, Therefore pride compasseth them about like a chain, Psal. 73. 6. They speak loftily, verse 8. and loftily indeed, for they set their mouth against the heavens, ver. 9. They speak with proud scorn of Religion, and those that are retainers to it. Proud——despisers of them that are good, 2 Tim. 3. 3.

'Tis the vanity of man, that he would fain have others

others to think him *happy*; And were it not for the considerations of *Religion*, and *another world* that it discovers, the *Rich* would be, of all men, the most *blessed*: But *Religion* denies *this*, and affronts the vanity of the *great*. It acquaints us with *nobler* and *surer*, with more *satisfying* and more *lasting* Riches. It pronounceth the *wicked Rich* to be *miserable* amid their *fulness*; that they are set in *slippery places*; that they are brought to *desolation* as in a *moment*; that they shall be *consum'd* with *terrors*, and their *image*, viz. the *remembrance* of them shall be *despised*, Psal. 73. On the other side, it teacheth, that the *righteous* is the *truly rich* and *only happy* man; and that the *little* he enjoys, is *better* than *great riches* of the *ungodly*, Psal. 37. 16. That he is *Heir* to a *mighty inheritance*, an *heavenly inheritance* an *everlasting* one: to the inheritance of a *Kingdom*, to a *Kingdom of Glory*, a *Kingdom* among the *blessed*, whose crown is *unmixt* and *unfading*. This outdoth all the *splendor* and *magnificence*, all the *enjoyments*, *expectations*, and *pretences* of the *Proud* who are *swell'd* by their *earthly Riches*; and their *pride* inclines them to hate *Religion* for *this* cause; and *those* especially that *minister* in it. The *wicked* that are *great*, take it in *scorn*, it should be thought any *greatness* excels *theirs*; and that there are *riches* so much *better* than those which make them the *adored* and *potent* of the world. They cannot



bear that the *Servants* of Religion, whom they have despis'd for wanting Lands and Titles, *Feathers* and *painted Coats*, should think of ever being more splendid and more happy than *They*: and therefore they are ready to scorn Religion, as phantastick delusion; and to account the hopes of it, as the imagery of dreams. They will talk as if *Heaven*, and the happiness of another world, were only feign'd, to support their spirits, that want the comforts of this. And that the mysterie of living again, was but the crafty contrivance of *Priests* and *Politicians* to gain wealth, and keep mankind in awe and observance by *Romantick* hopes, and causeless fears. Or, if the Church and its immediate servants partake of the good things of this world, they think it too much, for those that expect so much in another: They would have them live by Faith purely; intirely on the next world, without enjoying any thing in this. So that by all wayes of violence and oppression they endeavour to deprive them of their properties; and when they have made them poor and naked, they pour all manner of contempt upon them. When the Church is wholly Spiritual, that is, without all earthy comforts, and enjoyments; when the Ministers of it are cloath'd in Sack-cloth, and brought to a morsel of bread, and to an entire dependance upon what they will let them have: Then they clap their hands,

hands, and cry, *Ha, ha!* so would we have it; they treat them with *imperious Scorn*, speaking grievous things proudly, and contemptuously against the Righteous, Psal. 31. 18. Thus of the first sort of proud Contemnners of the Church. There is another, viz.

2. The *Spiritual proud*, that are lifted up above measure, in the thoughts of their *priviledges* and *attainments*. Pride takes occasion from all things: and when it hath not *riches* and *worldly honours* to raise it self upon, it takes even *Religion* to serve its vanity. It sets men upon the *pinnacle*, yea it carries them into the *clouds* of *imagination*: and thence they *Scornfully look down* upon all that are not of the same phanciful height. They choose unto themselves *singular wayes*, and heap up to themselves *Teachers of their own*; they put on glorious shews of *spirituality* and *strictness*; and make a more *refined form* of Godliness: And then they phancy, that they worship in a more acceptable and *Spiritual* manner, that they have more *knowledge* of Gods mind, and *experience* of his wayes, than all others: And so, that they are his *special favourites*, and more dear unto him than all the rest of mankind. That they only have *pure Ordinances*, and *pretious truths*; while the rest of the Church are in *darkness* and the *shadow* of death, cover'd with the night of *Ignorance* and *Superstition*: and were it not for them,



them, fire and brimstone, destruction and utter desolation would seize on the rest of men.

And being *thus* opinion'd of themselves, they will not mingle with the *wicked*, but gather into their *Select* companies, and worship after their *own* fashion: They despise the publick orders of the Church, and contemn those that are not in the *mode of singularity and separation*.

But *especially*, they look on the Ministers of the Church with the *greatest* and *bitterest* scorn: they undervalue their abilities, and defame their lives: they talk of them, as if there were nothing but *ignorance* and *debauchery* among them. As if a man were forsaken of God and all goodness, as soon as the Church had taken him into her service; and bereft of all understanding, and all sense of vertue and Godliness, as soon as he undertook to *Minister* in the *publique legal* places of worship. They greedily hunt after *Stories*, to make them odious and contemptible; and catch the vomit of *Atheists* and *Drunkards* to throw in their faces: I mean, they *publish*, and *authenticate* the slanderous lies that those sots make in their *more* than bestial debauches; what They intend for *sport*; these propagate in *malice*: they vent the scandalous tales among their friends, for *sad certainties*; and confirm them with *sighs*, and solemn *nods* (as the others did with *Oaths* and *Dammee's*)

*Dammee's*) as if they were troubled at the evil they report, when as indeed they are then most tickled and pleased! 'Tis marrow and fatness to them to hear and tell stories of the Sons of the Church: no one can oblige them more, than he that so entertains them: And when informations fail, they have good inventions to supply that want; so that no innocence can escape them: No virtue is protection against them. They'l interpret every harmless action into a miscarriage; and aggravate every the smallest miscarriage with all the most heinous circumstances of guilt and villany. Yea, where no blot is to be found, none to be pretended; there they vilifie the virtue of those unblamable persons, as dull morality, and them as strangers to the Spirit, and Mysterie of Religion.

But besides these, there is another sort of Proud, that are occasions of the Church's contempt: men that would have themselves thought to be the only friends to it: That will not be satisfied with their brethrens subscriptions and declarations for the Articles and Constitutions of the Church, except they will take *Their Interpretations*: And unless you will be of *their* mind in every disputed Doctrine; you must be publish'd enemies to the Church, and suspicions will be raised upon you as *secret adversaries*, and dangerous persons that undermine the foundations. These would set the Church



Church upon an *indivisible* point, and have it stand like a steeple *invers'd*. They would shut out those that have serv'd the Church to as good purpose, as any of themselves; that *can* do it, and *will* in spite of their *peevishness*, and *conceited* folly. Such men as *these* act as if they thought the Church had not enemies *enough*: they would make *more* divide from it, if they *could*: and would have *themselves* accounted the *only* members and pillars of it. Whether *this* be the way to assert its honour and reputation; or to lay the ground for *more* contempt; let indifferent men judge: and to their thoughts I leave it.

I come now to the other *General*, viz.

2. The **earnest Supplication**: — *Have mercy upon us, O Lord!*

This may be understood as a Petition both for, 1. *Pardon*: And 2. *Deliverance*.

1. Common contempt is a Judgement, of which sin is the ground and occasion: and when men complain of *Judgements*, they should remember their *offences*: which if they do, with hearty penitence, and due humiliation, they are then prepar'd for pardon, and *may*, and *ought* to apply themselves to God for it. This is the *first* thing to be done in order to deliverance from *any* evil, and particularly from *this*: 'Tis vain to seek for the removal of the effect, while the cause is suffer'd

fer'd to continue. Allow'd sin is contempt thrown upon the Majesty of God; and those that dishonour Him, shall be lightly esteem'd. He must first be restored to his honour by our humbling our selves, and renouncing our sins: and then He will be ready to deliver us in his time, from the Scorning of those that are at ease, and the contempt of the proud. For those that honour him, he will honour, 1. Sam. 2. 3. And when a mans waies please the Lord, his enemies shall be at peace with him, Prov. 16. 7.

This seems to be the first thing implied in the Petition: *Have mercy upon us, O Lord; in the pardon of our sins.*

The second is for deliverance from the contempt, of which they complain: and so the Supplication speaks thus: *Have mercy upon us, O Lord! and help us.*

They do not trouble themselves with Appeals and Apologies unto men; no, 'tis a small thing with them to be judged of mans judgement, 1 Cor. 4. 3. but they make their application to Him that judgeth righteously: if He approves, 'tis no matter who condemns; if He honour, let men vilifie and contemn at their peril. The Church seeks His favour and his help for deliverance: for vain is the help of man. And it seems to be exceeding earnest, and solicitous to procure it; which is implied in



the reiteration of the request, *Have mercy upon us, O Lord! have mercy.* Which earnestness we may not suppose to proceed only from tenderness of their own names and reputation, as if their being disvalued were so very grievous a thing to them: No, there was more in it, the honour of God was concern'd, and they were vilified and despised because of their Relation to Him: For *his sake they suffer'd reproach*, Psal. 69. 7. and the reproaches of them that reproached thee, saith the Psalmist, ver. 9. *are falln upon me.* Those that despise the Church, and its Servants, first despised God, and Religion: And 'tis the interest that his Glory hath in its contempt, that makes them in the Text so sensible, and so earnest. When men hate and contemn their Prince, and his Government, they will scarce dare to vent their spite immediately against him: but do it against his Ministers, and Favorites: in like manner, the contemptuous enemies of God carry themselves to him and to his Messengers, and Servants: they give him a little formality of complement and respect; but pour all possible scorn and reproach upon them: But 'tis for *his sake they are thus slain all the day long*; and He knows where the contempt, and enmity begins; so that when we are scorn'd on the account of Religion, we may resent it, and ought so far as to be earnest with God for deliver-

deliverance, because *his* honour is concern'd with ours.

But this will be matter of particular Application and Address, and therefore I say no more of it in this place; but descend to apply the discourse for our *Instruction* and *Practice*.

**I** *Infer First*, That no Church upon Earth can secure it self from contempt. *This* of the Jews was Gods own constitution; a Church of his framing, not only in the *essentials*, but in the *circumstances* of it: A Church inlightned by Prophets, founded on Miracles, and encouraged by the more than ordinary presence of God with them: and yet even *They* were a reproach to their neighbours, a scorn and derision to them that were round about them, Psal. 79. 4. *Their* souls were filled with the scorning of those that were at ease, and with the contempt of the proud.

And the *Christian* Church that succeeds into all their priviledges, and hath the addition of more and greater; That also hath undergone heavy burdens of contempt ever since it appear'd in the world. The Author of it was the Son of God, God blessed for ever; the brightness of his Fathers Glory, and express image of his person; and yet *He* was despised and rejected of men, Isa. 53. 3. they hid their faces from



from him, and esteemed him not; as *Isaiah* Prophesied, and the event made good. *He* came unto his own, and they received him not; yea, they rejected him with contempt: They reproach'd him in his Life, as a *Wine-bibber*, a *Glutton*, a friend of *Publicans* and *sinners*; In his *Doctrines*, as a *Deceiver*, and *Blasphemer*; In his *Miracles*, as a *Conjurer* and *Magician*, and one that cast out *Devils* by *Belzebub*; in his *Declarations*, and rightful claims, as an *ignominious Impostor*: And at his *Death*, they loaded him with all the marks of contempt and reproach imaginable: Seiz'd him with *Swords* and *Staves*, like a *Murderer* or a *Thief*; condemn'd him by a *publique cry*, as one not fit to live upon the earth, *Away with him*; *Crucifie him*, *crucifie him*; *Buffeted him*, *Spit upon him*, hung him upon an infamous tree, as a vile person between two notorious *Malefactors*. And if the *Master* had such usage, what were the *servants* to expect? If *He* be call'd *Belzebub*, what must they look for? *Matth. 10. 25.* They could expect no other than contempt and reproach, and they had it in full measure.

The *Apostles*, and immediate *Messengers* of the holy *Jesus*, were accounted as *madmen*, *bablers*, *deceivers* of the people; and *setters forth* of *strange Gods*; their way and *Doctrines*, *foolishness*, *cunningly devised fables*, every where spoken against. Their persons treat-  
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ed infamously with Whips, and publique scorns: And the *disciples* that were made by their Ministry and endeavours, had trial of *cruel mockings*, and *scourgings*, *bonds* and *imprisonment*; and were forced to wander about in *Sheep-skins* and *Goat-skins*, *destitute*, *afflicted*, *tormented*, as the Apostle speaks to the Hebrews, *Heb. 11.*

They suffered reproach from the *carnal proud*, their enemies without, *Jews* and *Heathens*: and from the *spiritual proud* that pretended to be within, the *Gnosticks*, those *vile Fanaticks* of the first times, who boasted that they were more knowing, and more spiritual than all others; that they better understood, yea, *only* understood the *mysterie* of Religion; they spoke *swelling words* of *vanity*, had *mens persons* in admiration, *heap'd up teachers*, crept into *houses*, led *captive silly women*, *despised dominions*, spoke *evil of dignities*, caused *divisions*, separated themselves, as they are described by the Apostles: These despised the true Church, and all the sober members of it, as people of a *low Form*, and utterly unacquainted with the *heights* and *spiritualities* of the Gospel; and therefore they scorn'd their company, and communion, and *went out from among them*.

I need not further prosecute the relation of the Churches usage in those old times: These last accounts lead my thoughts to our own; and perhaps



there have been *none* from the beginning which more sadly prove, that *no Church* can be secure from contempt, than *these*.

By the blessing of God we enjoy a Constitution, *Apostolical* in its *Doctrine*; *Primitive* in its *Govern-ment*; *decent* in its *Ceremonies*; *grave* and *pious* in its *Liturgy*; We have the *Scriptures*, the *Creeds*, the *Sacraments*, the *main Ordinances*, and *Duties* of the *first* and *purest* times; we are freed from *Idolatries*, *Superstitions*, and other corruptions of the *Roman Church*, on this hand; and clear from the vanities, and *Enthusiasms* that have overspread *some* pretended *Protestants* on that; our Church hath rejected the *painted bravery* of the one; and provided against the *sordid slovenliness* of the other. Her cloathing is *decent* and not *gaudy*; Hath all that which may assist *reverence*, without any thing that can directly minister to *vanity* or *superstition*.

It is a Church reformed by *grave Councils*, and not by popular *Tumults*; fram'd to *primitive* patterns, and not to *modern phancies*; conducted by *Reverend Prelates*, and not left to the pride and ignorance of *Novices*, or factious multitudes. And now, one would think, that *such* a Church as *this*, might escape the contempt of the *Proud*, and that it would be rever'd (at least) among the professors of the *same Faith* and *Religion*. But alas! how much otherwise is our case! we are exceed-  
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ingly contemn'd; our soul is exceedingly filled with the scorning of those that are at ease, and with the contempt of the proud. Never any Church had more just reason to take up this sad complaint of the Text than this.

For, its Government, the most Apostolical, and most Catholick, is decry'd by the spiritual proud, as Antichristian and Tyrannical: Its worship, the purest and most primitive, reproach'd as Idolatrous, and avoided by them as the Plague: Its Liturgy (the best in the world) loaded with contempt, and made a common Theme of derision: Its discipline made void by every one that pleaseth; observ'd by very few out of Conscience, and by none out of Fear: Its penalties the greatest (its Excommunications that were so justly terrible heretofore) slighted and despised, as if they were but meer Bugs and Scare-crows: Its Ceremonies, those few comely Rites it enjoys, declam'd against with loud outcries, as superstitious and abominable; and its publick places of worship (those sacred houses of God) deserted, as if their walls were infected; and exchange'd for private corners.

Such contempt is pour'd upon this excellent Church, and all this reproach it suffers from the spiritual proud, who think themselves wiser than the Aged, not because they keep, but because they break the Laws, and phancy they are inlightned enough

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to be a Law unto themselves, without needing the Rules of other Governours, than those of their own Imaginations. In the last days shall come Scoffers, walking after their own lusts, 2 Pet. 3. 3. Phari-  
saical as well Debauch'd Scoffers, who walk after their phantastical, as the others do after their carnal lusts; and therefore despise and contemn all Laws that should bound and restrain them.

But the Church suffers contempt also from the other sort, the carnal proud have her exceedingly in derision, and make mouths at her. And we are fallen into an Age, in which to be a Church, and to profess Religion, not this, or that, but any, is occasion enough, with some (and God knows not a few) for contempt and scorning. The fool, in old time, said in his heart, There no God, Psal. 14. 1. but that folly hath put off its modesty in ours: and vile men now set more than their hearts against the Heavens, Psal. 73. 9. 'Tis wit to deride Religion, and modish accomplishment to make merriment of things Sacred. As if we were past the dispensation of disputing against God; and were so certain that he is not, or not to be worshipped, that there were no more to be done now, but to laugh at the silly belief of his Existence, and the vain folly of adoring Him.

To this height we are come, and by it have out-done the impudence of all former times;  
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and what we are to expect if this bold impiety be not stopt, is very *sad*, but very *easie* to foresee. What are the effects of it at present, we know; and the Church wofully feels in the extream contempt and scorn that is upon it. And by reason of the one sort of proud contemners, and the other, it may too justly complain in the words of the Jewish Church in the *Lamentations*, *I am a derision to all my people; and their Song all the day; and in the language of the Prophet, How do I sit solitary, that was full of people! my ways mourn because few come to my solemn Feasts; my Gates are desolate. My Priests sigh, and the precious Sons of Sion, comparable to fine Gold, are esteem'd as earthen pitchers, the work of the hands of the Potter. My adversaries are the chief, my enemies prosper; all my persecutors overtake me between the straights. They hiss, and gnash their teeth, and say, We have swallowed her up: Certainly this is the day we looked for, we have found, we have seen it. This is our case, and O Lord, have mercy upon us: have mercy upon us; for none other fighteth for us, but only thou, O God.*

II. **S**ince we cannot be secure from contempt, let us endeavour not to *deserve* it; nor give occasion to that hatred and scorn which is upon the Church and its members. This I shall take liberty to address, (1.) To my Brethren of the

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**Clergy** ; and (2.) To the **people** that are yet in communion with us.

1. As for **Us**, we are sure to be the first, and deepest sharers of the contempt that is upon the Church : And how it is with us at this day by reason of it, is easie to see, but deplorable to consider. I desire not to speak fond, or overweaning things, but this I think I may say with justice, That no Church in the world enjoys a more truly learned, and sober Clergy than this ; and with as much truth I may affirm, That no Clergy upon earth undergoes so great a burden of contempt. The *Heathens* of all times, and places of the world have had reverence for their Priests : the *Jews* and *Turks* sacred respect for theirs ; the people of the *Greek Churches* pay great veneration to the meanest of the Priesthood ; the *Romanists* are very respectful to them. Yea, even the several Classes of *Seets* among us, reverence their Teachers : So that the dueness of respect to the Ministers of Religion, seems to be the common acknowledgement of mankind ; grounded upon the Relation they have to God, as his *Embassadors*, and *Stewards* of his *Mysteries* ; and the nobleness and importance of the business they are employed in, the conducting the souls of men to everlasting happiness.

But we, the Clergy of this Church ; and only  
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we, seem to be cut off from the common acknowledged rights of Priesthood : as if there were an exception against us in the general Rule, and all the Ministers of Religion were to be honour'd, except those of the *Church of England*.

In all cases else, greatness of Relation, and dignity of employment give title to respect : But in this, where the Relation is to the *highest*, and the business is about things most *worthy*, and most *necessary*, the practice is quite otherwise : and we are *exposed* by our character and employment to *disesteem* and neglect. 'Tis true, we are guilty of many sins and imperfections, that may occasion *disrespect*; but I hope, not in proportion to the contempt that is upon us. In judging of all others, men make abatements in consideration of the weakness of humane nature : But *we* are *under the Law* (I mean as to mens censures) and are judg'd by the *strictest severities* : there is no *mitigation*, no *pardon* for us, and it will not be considered that we are but *dust*.

Yea every *Mote* in our eye, is made a beam, every *infirmity* is blown up to an height of *villany*; and every vice of which any person among us is guilty, is reflected upon the whole Order.

So that were it not for the right we expect at a juster Bar, than that of mans judgement, we



were of all men the most miserable : for we are treated here, as if we had no claim to the civility and good nature of mankind, but were either *another race* of creatures, or *outlaws* of this. The Apostle suppos'd it reasonable, we should be counted worthy of *double honour* ; but the world thinks *single* respect too much for us, and *treble* contempt scarce enough. We are gone over as the stones in the street, by the *carnal* proud, and reckon'd as the dirt of it by the *spiritual* Scorners : Yea, there are scarce any whose condition is so bad, or so low, but think themselves good enough, and great enough to despise us.

We look not for the great honours and veneration of the world, and 'tis not fit we should ; but yet, there is no man, that is not stupid, but would be sensible of such treatment ; and I think we ought to resent it, since the ground of our reproach is contempt upon Religion, if not upon the *Author* of it. Abstract us from our relation to *that*, and our Order may without boasting, pretend to as much wisdom, and knowledge, ingenuity and vertue, as other men. Our *Education* is as handsome and ingenuous, and I know not why the *parts* of the Clergy should not be equal to those of other ways of breeding : So that we might pass well enough in the world, and, for ought I know, might meet tolerable reception in it, were it not that

that God hath honour'd us with the dignity of being his immediate Servants, and hath employ'd us in the affairs of Souls. But for *this*, I can see no cause, why we should not be as capable of the qualities that procure respect, as others that have a competent measure of it: And therefore upon the whole matter, I must say, that we are so far from having *honour* for our office and our work sake, that we are lessened by them, and if a Minister meet respective entertainment in the world, the kindness is extorted by some *personal* advantages he owns; and not given him for his *character* and Functions; no, he's taken down, and is so much less, in consideration of it. So that God himself is affronted, and Religion vilified by the excessive, unreasonable contempt that is put upon the dispensers of his Truths and Laws: And 'tis pity that our concernment in this matter will not permit us without incurring more reproach, roundly to reprove this indignity to our Lord and theirs, who hath sent us in the most important errand to them. But alas, all we can do without the loud imputation of *Preaching up our selves*, is to bear our Reproach in silence, and to mourn in secret, for that horrid *Atheism*, and Scorn of all Religion, or of the best, which is the occasion of it: and certainly where there is contempt of the Priesthood above board, there is disvalue of:



of Religion under it : disrespect to one doth suppose, and will soon produce irreverence to the other.

Upon the whole, we see, how great reason we have to be cautious, that we contribute not to the contempt that is on Religion and our selves, and justifie this impious barbarous Age in it. And there is no better advice can be given to secure us from it, than that of St. Paul to Timothy, 1 Tim. 4. 16. *Take heed unto thy self, and to the doctrine.*

It concerns us first, to take heed of our selves, to our Lives and Conversations. We have many observers whose malice makes them critical and curious ; They lay in wait for our haltings, and are glad at heart, when they have caught an opportunity to revile us ; we are encompassed on all hands by those envious pryers ; by the *debauched* on the one side, and the *Schismatical* on the other. The roaring Lyon is before us, and the wily Serpent in the next ambush ; one would fain have an occasion from our miscarriages to tear and violate the honour of all Religion ; and the other to spit its venome against that which we profess. It behoves us therefore to beware, and to walk *circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, because the daies are so evil.*

In order hereunto I humbly recommend these  
Cautions

Cautions in particular, that we take care not to be found guilty of, 1. *Pharisaism*. 2. *Immorality*, or, 3. *Negligence* in our calling.

1. *Pharisaick* righteousness, and *Phantastick* heights of zeal beget great respects and veneration among the vulgar; but contempt among those of better understanding; and there is nothing whereby Religion hath been more expos'd in the present Age, than this. *Plain unaffected* righteousness and sincerity is accountable in all times, and hath still reputation among the most knowing: but the *flanting shews* of the *Pharisee* are despised as soon as they are understood. Our *Righteousness* then must exceed *his*, not in pomp, and appearance, but in reality and sincere practice. There is no one that understands the nature of Religion, the constitution of our Church, and the temper of the Age, but knows it to be the present interest both of Church and Religion, that *Pharisaism*, which is the general humour that runs through all the *Proud Sects*, should be discountenanc'd and detected; and therefore we should take heed, that we do not encourage the spreading vanity, by any conformity unto it.

Indeed there is no other way left now, to make us popular, and to Crown us with the applauses of the people: and those who affect that sort of glory and reputation, are under great temptation to  
square:



square their discourse and lives according to those vain models: but *those* Ministers deserve to be despis'd that are possess'd by that low spirited ambition: and do not prefer the pleasing God, and Conscience, and the few wise men, before the pacifying the humours, and receiving the caresses and applauses of ignorant and giddy Phantasticks: and there are no sort of men worse enemies to this Church than these; who while they pretend to be of it, promote this spirit and humour that destroyes it.

2. We ought on *this*, as on all accounts else, to shun all Immoralities of practice. Vice makes any one contemptible among good men, and as despicable among all. The worst have an abhorrence of Debauchery, or any degree of Prophaneness in the Church. The best shun it.

And there is no better advice can be given to lecture us from it, than that of St. Paul to Timothy, 1 Tim. 4. 16. Take heed unto thyself, and to the doctrine.

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Or if we do nothing that is *morally* evil, yet such is the world now, that advantage will be taken of the least *appearance*; every thing shall be urg'd against us that the wit of malice can make criminal; And therefore it exceedingly concerns us to heed the Rule of the Apostle, *Avoid all appearances of evil*, 1 Thes. 5. 22. we should take care not to come within the shadow of it. We live in an Age, in which 'tis not enough for a Clergyman to be *innocent*, there is much wisdom and prudence necessary to keep *that* from having a stain upon it. And though we be as harmless as Doves, yet we shall not be thought to be so, except we are as wise as Serpents. Men were never more *careless* of their *own* conversations, and never more exact observers and censurers of ours; so that nothing will *secure* us in this Age, from thing whereby Religion hath been more expos'd in the present Age, than this. Plain unaffected righteousness and sincerity is accountable in all times, and hath still reputation among the most knowing: but the *flaming shews* of the Pharisee are despised as soon as they are understood. Our *Righteousness* then must exceed *his*, not in pomp, and appearance, but in reality and sincere practice. There is no one that understands the nature of Religion, the constitution of our Church, and the temper of the Age, but knows it to be the present interest both of Church and Religion, that *Pharisaism*, which is the general humour that runs through all the *Proud Sects*, should be discountenanc'd and detected; and therefore we should take heed, that we do not encourage the spreading vanity, by any conformity unto it.

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2. We ought on this, as on all accounts else, to shun all Immoralities of practice. Vice makes any one contemptible among good men, and as despicable among all. The worst have an abhorrence of Debauchery, or any degree of Prophaneness in the Clergy: The best things degenerated, are worst. 'Tis true, live we how we will, the malicious world will find accusations against us, but we must take care we do not justify their reproaches. Though (as things are in the present Age) we are disabled from doing much to promote Religion by our Doctrine; yet we may disserve it much by our lives. The best that we can say doth but little good; but the least evil that we do, is cause of great hurt and mischief. Men are hardened by it in their Contempt of Religion, and we are made incapable of doing it, or *them* any considerable service.

Or

Or if we do nothing that is *morally* evil, yet such is the world now, that advantage will be taken of the least *appearance*; every thing shall be urg'd against us that the wit of malice can make criminal; And therefore it exceedingly concerns us to heed the Rule of the Apostle, *Avoid all appearances of evil*, 1 Thes. 5. 22. we should take care not to come within the shadow of it. We live in an Age, in which 'tis not enough for a Clergyman to be *innocent*, there is much wisdom and prudence necessary to keep *that* from having a stain upon it. And though we be as harmless as Doves, yet we shall not be thought to be so, except we are as wise as Serpents. Men were never more *careless* of their *own* conversations, and never more exact observers and censurers of ours; so that nothing will *secure* us in this Age, from the tongues set on fire of Hell: our only course is to be as much as we can out of their way; And as far as our profession will give leave to draw our selves up into *privacy* and *retirement*. For the Sea is too rough for us to be abroad upon it.

The summ is, 'Tis not possible for us to avoid contempt, but we may avoid being accessory unto it, if we take care that our Religion be not *Pharisaical*, nor our practice *immoral*, in reality or appearance. Not that it is sufficient for a Mini-



ster of the Gospel to be thus *negatively* righteous; no, besides other considerations, we have a great charge upon us, which will require a very *active* piety; And therefore,

3. We must take heed also that we are not *negligent* in the great business of our noble Calling. That business is so worthy and so necessary, that it requires the chief of our thoughts, the flower of our time, and the vigour of our endeavours, to bestow less upon it is to neglect it: and every neglect of *that*, deserves a degree of contempt upon our selves. *Give thy self wholly to these things*, was the instruction of the Apostle, 1 Tim.

4. 15. and our *whole* is little enough: for *who is sufficient for these things*, 2 Cor. 2. 16. and when we have done all, we are *unprofitable Servants*, Luke 17. 10. 'Tis little we can do, God knows, to make the world *wiser* or *better*; it is too wise, in conceit, to be taught; and too bad in practice, to be amended by us. However we must labour, and ply the Oar, though the tyde be never so strong against us. 'Tis part of the *patience* of the Gospel, to work even there, where our labour for the present, is in vain. It will not be so always, 1 Cor. 15. no, it shall be rewarded by plentiful Glory hereafter, though it were not encouraged by any visible success here. *Those rewards* we publish and expect, and for us to do the work of the Lord *negligently*, is to put a slight

slight upon them, and upon Religion, *our selves*, and to invite contempt from *others*. And there is none certainly that more justly deserves the extreme degrees of it, than he that loiters in the Lords Vineyard, and is negligent in the Ministry of Souls.

I have exprest these *cautions* in a *negative* way, but hope it will be understood, that the *positive* duties are *included*. When I say, we are not to be *Pharisaical* in our Religion; I intend also, that we are to be very *plain*, *sober*, and *sincere* in it: When I caution against *immoral* lives, I imply, that ours ought to be very *virtuous* and *religious*: When I give the rule against *negligence*, I have taken care to be understood to mean likewise, that the greatest *sedulity* and *diligence* is our duty. To have run out into full Comments upon *these*, would have taken up more than my whole time. I descend to the Second Head in the *Apostle's Rule*.

2. We ought to take heed to our *Doctrine*, if we would not deserve contempt. We live in a ticklish Age for *this* also; an Age of *itching* ears, and *curious* palats: men were never so *critical* upon their *teaching*, though 'tis likewise sadly true that they were never so little careful to practise according to it.

In the *variety* and *oppositions* of opinions, phancies, humours, and capacities, an Angel from



Heaven could not please all; and as things are, those that are not pleased with the Doctrine, will condemn the Preacher. So that avoid contempt we cannot; but we shall not deserve it, if our Doctrine be guided by our end; and that is the Glory of God in the Salvation of those that hear us. The business of Preaching, is to instruct men in what they are to believe and do, in order to their serving God, and being happy. This is the great Rule, this the measure. And the Discourses that are not directed by it, may be witty Orations, and learned entertainments, but they are not good Sermons. For every thing is to be judg'd by its fitness for its end. If our Doctrines, and publique instructions are squar'd by that, we shall approve our selves unto God and Conscience; though vain and phantastick men despise us: and so we are to speak not as pleasing men, but God, 1 Thes. 2. 4.

There is nothing by which some Preachers have more exposed Religion and themselves, than by propounding other ends, and such mean ones as the gaining the reputation of being Witty, Eloquent, or Learned: for when they miss their aim (as they do always with the wise) they fall under extream contempt with them. The affectations of words, and Metaphors, and Cadencies, and ends of Greek, and Latin, are now the scorn of the judicious, and as much despis'd and (almost)

most) as *generally* as they deserve. They are banish'd from conversation, and are not endured in *common* matters; for shame then let us not retain them in our Pulpits, and defile *sacred* Subjects with them. Let us leave those sorts of *fooling*, when none but the ignorant can be deceiv'd by them into a good opinion of us; and by their use we shall deceive our selves into the derision and Contempt of all that have either wit or judgement; and which is infinitely worse, into the displeasure and wrath of God.

1. Our business in Preaching is the greatest and most important, and therefore we should be very *grave* and *serious* in it; to be *slight*, *flashy*, or *affected* in so solemn an affair, is to shew our selves vain and contemptible triflers.

2. We are to instruct all sorts, the most ignorant, as well as the more knowing, in the matters of Faith and practice; and therefore should design and endeavour to be as *plain* as we can, both in our Doctrines and Expressions, avoiding *hard words*, and senseless *phrases*, and speaking in the *proper*, *natural*, *easie* way, which is most profitable for the ignorant, and most acceptable with the wise.

3. And for the accommodation of the *memories*, as well as the understandings of the generality of hearers, our Discourses should be in clear, facile, and



and distinct *methods*; not involv'd in *confusions*, nor spun out into nice *divisions*, or numerous particulars.

4. And because the main work is to persuade, and direct an holy life, our Sermons should mostly be *practical*, and *affectionate*: Not but that we may labour to explain, establish, and defend the great *principles* of *Faith* and *practice*, especially in an Age in which such *Shipwrack* is made of both: but then we must take care that *those* we teach are *such* indeed, and that we vent not *speculative* notions and opinions, as *fundamentals* of Religion. We are not to be concern'd for any *Doctrines* in our Pulpits, but for the *great* and *certain* Articles of *Faith* and *Life*; As for our opinions, this is not the place for them: For it is not our business to make people in all points, *Orthodox* and *Knowing*; but to endeavour that they may be *sincere* and *good*, which is *wisdom* to *salvation*. These I take to be *proper measures* for *Preaching*, and if he that directs himself by them, be *despised* for his *Doctrine*, he will have this comfort, that the contempt he suffers is none of his fault.

I have done with what I intended for my Brethren of the *Clergy*, namely for the *younger* sort, for I presume not to instruct the elder and graver men.

I am

I Am (II.) to apply the advice of this general *Use*, to the **people**, who yet profess themselves of our Church. You see the contempt that is upon it, and I beseech you to consider whether its pretended friends have not been, and are not still, great occasions of it. The greatest part of Christians are incapable of judging concerning the *truth* or *goodness* of any Church or Constitution of Religion: but are inclin'd in their opinion, and affection by the general *temper* and *practice* of its professors and adherents: Now 'tis an almost universal principle among men, that *Religion* and the *Worship* of God *require* the greatest *seriousness* and *zeal*; where these are observ'd in peoples carriage to their particular Church, the most are usually inclin'd to have respect for *that*: on the other side, when the members of any Church are cold and unconcern'd, or wanton and irreverent in their Religion; *such* a temper when it comes to be *general*, draws popular contempt upon that Church and way.

This at present is the sad case of ours; and I doubt it may be too truly said, that there are no retainers to any Church in the world, who are so little concern'd for it, and the worship of God in it, as the pretenders to the *Church of England*. If we survey our several Congregations, and consider:

OUT:



our people, we shall find but very few that carry themselves, as if they had any conscientious affection to the Religion they profess. If the Estimate be taken from those that are *constant* or *frequent* at the publick Prayers in *Cathedrals*, or other Churches; certainly the number must be acknowledg'd to be very *small*; and if we reckon only *such* that carry but the appearance of *serious* Devotion, it will be yet *less*: so that the Church may almost be tempted to say with him, *There is not one godly man left, the righteous are minished from among the children of men.*

There are indeed multitudes, who will tell us they are of this Church, when they give us no ground, but their *bare word*, to believe they are of *any*: While they talk of *owning* and *adhering* to the Church, they will not afford the solemn worship of it as much as their *bodily* presence, as long as the Devil and their Lusts have employment for them elsewhere: They carry themselves to it, as to a matter of the greatest *indifference*; will go to Church now and then, when time lies upon their hands, and they are in the humour for it; and then again never think of Religion, or Worship, till another accident excites them. And when they come to such *Sacred* places as *this*, with what rude *boldness* do they enter Gods house? and how much carelesness and irreverence do they express  
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in their very looks and garb? Confident negligence seems at present to be a *fashion*; and the whole carriage after is sutable to this ill beginning. What *toying, talking, gazing, laughing*, and other rude follies may we observe in the midst of the most solemn parts of worship? and how much slightness and playfomness in speaking of *serving God, being devout, saying prayers*, and such like *serious* things after it?

Now when these carriages are observ'd (not to mention *worse*) in *those* that say they are of the Church of *England*, how readily doth it dispose the generality of men, who judge by bare appearance, to think *amiss* of the Church that is ordinarily thus treated by its members; and to *suppose* most others that profess it, to be of the *same* sort, or not very different; and so to *despise* the Church, and all that adhere unto it. This certainly is a very great occasion of her present contempt; and if you would not be accessory to its increase and growth (if it be capable of any more) beware of this *carelessness* and *irreverence* to the Religion you profess.

If Religion be a *real* thing, and not a meer imagination (as nothing is more certain) it then requires our greatest *zeal and veneration*; and the most *serious* exercise of our faculties, and endeavours: no prostrations can be too low in the adora-



tion of the God of Heaven ; no ingagement of soul too intense, in praying for his blessing, and praising him for his bounty ; no attention too serious in hearing of His Word ; no deportment too awful in His eye, and special presence. Let us all consider this, and demean our selves in our worship, as those that are in earnest : Let the light of our zeal and devotion *so shine before men, that they, seeing our works, may glorifie God*, reverence the Church, and vindicate it and us from the scorning of those that are at *ease*, and the contempt of the *proud*. Let us endeavour *so* to worship, that the fervour of our piety may equal the truth of our profession ; and our actions in Religion, may have some lutableness to our expectations from it. And then though the *Church* and we are filled with contempt, yet we shall be clear from any imputation of the guilt ; and our souls may be at *ease*, though we are scorn'd by the *Proud*.

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Preach'd at a Visitation.

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S E R M O N VI.

MORAL EVIDENCE

OF A

Life to Come.

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*The Second Edition.*

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THE ROMAN VI.

OF THE  
LIFE OF

Life to Come.

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THE SECOND EDITION

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M. 11



# SERMON VI.

MATTH. XXII. 32.

— God is not the God of the dead, but of the living —

**N**otwithstanding the manifold and immediate Transactions of God with the people of the Jews; yet were they a dull and stupid generation, addicted very much to the matters of *sense*, and indisposed to things of *spiritual* and *invisible* nature. Yea, there was a great and famous Sect among them that denied a *Life to come*, and the Existence of *immaterial* beings, For the Sadducees say, there is no Resurrection, neither Angels, nor Spirit, Acts 23. 8.

These put the Question here to our Saviour in a case of a woman, who successively had seven Husbands, whose Wife she should be at the Resurrection,



rection, from ver. 22. to the 28. which captious Query they intended for an Argument against the Doctrine of another Life.

Christ answers directly to the objection, by telling them their mistake of the *state and condition* of that Life: since they *neither marry, nor are given in marriage*, that have attain'd unto it, but are *like the Angels of God*, ver. 30. and then, takes occasion to prove the Resurrection, or *Living again* of the dead, out of the writings of *Moses*, the only Scripture the *Sadducees* allow'd, ver. 31, 32.

“ But as touching the Resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, *I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob* ? ——— *God is not the God of the dead but of the living.*

The former clause of the *verse* cites the Scripture which is the ground of the Argument, the latter is a principle of Reason; and both together infer, That there is a Resurrection.

Now the *ἀνάστασις τῶν νεκρῶν*, the Resurrection of the dead undertaken to be shewn, was *not* the Resurrection of the *body* ( though *that* be a great truth also ) since the argument doth not reach *this*; For one who believes that the soul lives after death, may say, That God is the God of *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, though the *body* doth *not* rise; for they are *living* in their *souls*, which are their true selves.  
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And therefore the Conclusion our Saviour went about to prove was, that *There is another Life*, which the Sadducees deny'd and endeavour'd by this Question, though very weakly, to overthrow. And the word *ἀνάστασις* signifies *standing up*, and implies, Living again, *simply*, not the Resurrection of the Body; except where the Body is exprest, or the necessary sense doth otherwise inforce it. So that, though it be a truth that the *body* shall rise, and demonstrable from many other places, yet it is not meant here; but the thing intended to be prov'd, is, *a Life to come*; without determining whether *in our bodies* or *without them*.

This was undertaken, and this was perform'd, for the Sadducees were put to silence, ver. 34. That they were convinc'd, we do not hear; Arguments from Faith or Reason prevail little against corrupt interests, and affections. But yet 'tis something to stop the mouths of Gainsayers; for others may be fortified in their Faith by the confutation of the enemies of it.

Would to God we could say, There was no need of endeavours of this sort, in our days, and that this subject were quite out of date. But alas! we see Sadducism reviv'd, after *Light and Immortality* hath been brought to light through the Gospel; and the Holy Jesus hath given sensible assurance of it by his own Resurrection from the dead. Yea, the  
Here



Heresie is improv'd in our *time* to a great and more dangerous height; and almost to *Atheism* it self. We are faln into an Age wherein, among some, and those not a few, 'tis a piece of *Gallantry* to be an *Infidel*: and Heroically great to have out-grown the *panick* terrours of *another* world. We have liv'd to see the Doctrine of *Spirits*, professedly and openly derided, and *that* of *Living again* esteem'd equally vain, and ridiculous. The *wantomness* of some hath *disputed* all the Articles of the Christian Creed; and the *lusts* of others have taken advantage thence boldly to *deny* them.

So that 'tis not unseasonable in such a world as *this*, to labour in the proof of a future Being. For besides those that openly oppose this Principle of our Faith; the vileness and debauchery of our days are too sad an argument that many others do not believe it. Men could not be so *impious*, did they believe themselves *immortal*; nor live so much like *Beasts*, did they not think also that they should die as *such*.

Now as our Saviour, dealing with the *Jewish Sadducees*, did not make use of the proofs that were most obvious and direct, but of that which was most *subtle*; not of the plain and clear places in the *other* Scriptures, of which the Sadducees made no account; but of *this* from the Books of *Moses*, whose Authority they granted: In like manner,

ner, while we treat with the *modern Sadducees*, we must not offer Arguments from the Testimony of *these or other Scriptures*, which they value not; but reckon with them from the principles of *Reason*, which they cannot but acknowledge. And the Arguments I shall now use, to prove a *Future Life*, shall be of this latter sort: and those not taken from *Philosophick* heights, and remote *Speculations*, but from *moral* Considerations, improving things obvious; and taking ground from matters of common observation. And though I hope there are none of those Infidels in *this* place; yet, I suppose, it may not be wholly unprofitable to you to be minded of the *reasons* of your *Faith*, in days wherein so many make *Shipwrack* of it.

This then I shall endeavour, *viz.*

1. To shew some *moral* Arguments to enforce the belief of a *Future Life*.
2. The causes and occasions of *unbelief*, in this Article.
3. What this Infidelity *infers* in the just reasoning and consequence of it.

For the *First*, I prove a *Life to Come*,

1. From some *OBSERVABLES* in the great world. And,
2. From the *FRAME* and *CONSTITUTION* of our *own* Natures.



The *Phænomena*, or observables I argue from, are (1.) The *Miseries* of this state. And 2. The *unequal distribution* of good and evil here.

I begin with the *Miseries* of this Life. In the description of which, I shall take liberty to enlarge a little, that we may have such a sense of it, as may dispose us to feel the force of the Argument. Let us consider then, That

In whatever condition we look on this poor thing we call *man*, there is nothing but *misery* before us: Prosperity is temptation to wantonness and excess: Adversity to murmuring and impatience: Riches are anxiety and care; and poverty, a complicated misery: Labour is pain, and idleness as uneasy as employment: Wisdom affords cutting senses of the evils we encounter; and folly exposeth us to the edge of cross events. *He that increaseth knowledge increaseth trouble*, Eccl. 1. 18. and *the soul without it is not good*, Prov. 19. 2. Our enjoyments satiate, and weary us; and disappointments are smart afflictions; so that we *want* both when we *have*, and when we *have not*, and are miserable both in successful issues, and in defeatures: we complain of our misfortunes, and seek rest and ease in the shifting of our condition; but in a short time we find as many other evils as those we shun'd; and are convinc'd, that the change of our state yields no  
happi-

happiness, but a different kind of misery. Like men in a Fever, we tosse from side to side, and find rest no where but in the Grave. If we have a pleasant moment we pay severely for it in the next, and a short happiness is a torment. We are devour'd by our eager appetites, and torn piecemeal by the contrariety of desires and inclinations: We carry all the beasts of prey within us; There's a fire in our breasts that consumes us, and we die by the same flame by which we live. Nor is the condition of our *bodies* less sad and tragical: We are scorch'd by Fevers, melted in Catarrhs, burn and freeze in Agues, are rack'd by Gouts, maim'd by Gangrenes, and rent asunder by violent pains within our bowels: At last we are made the food of worms, except a Consumption deceive them, and send away our flesh before us. The *best* of our condition is, that we can die, and mingle with *insensible* rottenness and corruption. The Grave is the best bed we find till we turn to ashes; and the silent darkness of the house of worms and bones, is better than the light of the Sun, and comfort of the Elements.

Such is the condition of this *mortal* Life; This is our *portion*, and *our lot is this*. And these miseries of the *present* state afford us the comfort of the Conclusion, That there is *another*: and that *this* is not *all* the Life of man. For God hath made



us, and not *we our selves*; And he is infinitely good, and infinitely powerful: Absolutely perfect, and perfection it self, and of his fulness he communicates to his creatures, and takes infinite pleasure in so doing. This our *Reasons*, and the common notions of mankind teach us concerning God: And hence it follows, that he hath *made nothing* to be *miserable*; he hath no pleasure in the vexations, and destruction of the Living; but *made all things that they might enjoy their Being*: There can be no envy, imperfection, or shadow of evil, or defect in the fountain of Benignity and fulness. Now He that is so absolutely *perfect*, and so infinitely *good*, hath plac'd us under these circumstances of *present* infelicity; and therefore from that goodness, and that perfection, we may argue, that he hath made *other* provision for us; and that there is a *Life besides* this mortal miserable condition.

Otherwise, with how much reason might we expostulate as Job did, Job 3. 20. *Why was light given unto man? why was the Sun suffer'd to see a thing so miserable? why did we not go from the darkness of the Womb to that of the Grave; and cease to be, as soon as we had a Being? Is our Maker pleas'd with our sighs; or is there any Musick or sweetness to Him in our groans and tears? Every thing else that he hath made, is perfect*

perfect in its kind, and enjoys an happiness suitable to its nature : And must ours be the single *excepted* case, and *man* be the *only* instance of wretchedness and misery ?

These suppositions are not consistent with the perfections of the Divine nature, and yet would be sad realities if *this Life* were *all* ; and there were nothing else to succeed it.

2. I prove there is *another Life*, from the *unequal distribution* of good and evil in *this*. The passages of the *present* world are a very *Chaos* ; there must be a world of light and order. All things here come *alike unto all*, Eccles. 9. 2. Yea, there is very often a worse event of things to the righteous, than to the wicked. Treasons and Villanies are crown'd with successful issues : Triumphs and Victories attend the Ensigns of Tyrants and Usurpers ; the Just is made a prey to the Sons of Violence ; and persecuted in his friends and name, even beyond the Grave ; while the injurious are Courted by sailing successes, and born to the Stars by flatteries and applauses. They lay down their heads upon peaceful pillows, and take farewell of the world in solemn and pompous obsequies : When the persecuted Vertue swims in a Sea of blood to the Tomb, without other ceremony, than the tears and groans of a ruin'd Family : there is no answer *here* to the  
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cries of the Fatherless and the Widow; the Oppressed go down complaining into darkness; and providence seems as *silent* as the Grave. Wickedness hath Vertue's Livery and reward, and the Patrimony of Innocence is beggary and unhappiness. Providence seems *now* by glorious successes to countenance the *Alchoran*, and the Tyrant *Ottom.* spreads his victorious Arms, and is flesh'd in Triumphs. *The race is not to the swift, nor the battel to the strong, nor bread to men of understanding*, Eccl. 9. 11. But the things of Earth seem to be distributed by a kind of blind *Lottery*, and to justify the conclusion of the Atheist, that the *moral* world (as he supposeth of the *natural*) is rul'd by a *fortuitous* range of undesign'd events.

*Thus* things are in the *present* world; and yet Almighty Wisdom and Justice governs and presides over it. And thence we may conclude, that all things shall *at last* be clear'd, and order'd according to the Rules of exactest Justice and *Decorum*: And since it is not done in *this* life, we with much reason expect and believe *another*.

We see all things in the world of *Nature*, are carried on in a beautiful well disposed order: There is harmony and elegance in the motion of the Sun and Stars; and inferiour creatures are managed by apparent wisdom and contrivance: the Universe is a great beauty, made up of regular

lar variety; there is no monstrosity or unbecoming disharmony in nature.

Now can we think, that the divine wisdom would be so curious in ordering the world of things below us; and give up his nobler workmanship to eternal confusions and disorders?

No, certainly, He that gives the *hungry* Beasts their *meat* in *due season*, and sends his showers at the appointed time, to refresh the dry and parched ground; He that waters the Spring with his seasonable dews, and ripens the Fruit with his benign beams; He that teacheth the Rivers when they shall overflow; and hath made the swelling Ocean know its bounds and limits: will doubtless take care that Vertue shall *at last* be happy; and that the wicked shall receive the due reward of their impieties. The present disorders are but *preparations* for that state of order, and like the rude dashes and rudiments of a Picture.

Thus of the arguments I propos'd from the *First General*, the *Phænomena* or *Observables* of the World.

I descend to the SECOND, the *Frame* and *Constitution* of our *own natures*. And under this, shall consider our **Reasons, Passions, Appetites,** and **Instincts**: from each of which I shall infer something for the proof of a future Being.

I begin.



I begin I. with our Faculty of *Reason*. This is a noble power, and exercis'd not only about the matters of the body, but upon the *highest* and *noblest* objects; in a way that is *rais'd*, and *spiritual*, and shews a capacity of far *greater* heights and improvements: Which exercises, and perfecti-  
ons prove, that it is design'd for more than this poor mortal condition. For if this be *all* the Life of man, his *end* and happiness would then be only to provide for the body, and the gratification of its Senses: And if we were made for *no more* than *this*, our *Reasons* are a superfluous provision in nature: For what need of the Notions of a *God*, *Universals*, and *Abstracted* Theories; in order to the filling of our *bellies*, and the pleasing of our *Senses*? What need of a power of drawing one thing from another in a chain of long dependances; if we had nothing to do but to eat, and drink, and laugh, and die? The *eye* cannot be entertain'd upon *abstracted* notions; nor the *palate* feasted upon *Geometrick* subtilties; there is no *Musick* to the ear in any demonstration of *Euclid*, nor any recreation to the Senses in spiritual contemplations.

Yea *high* and *intense* exercise of our reasons is so far from being serviceable in such *low* offices and pleasures, that 'tis prejudicial to them; for it spends the Spirits, mortifies the body, and  
flats

flats the pleasure of the Senses: So that if this were our *only* state, and the advantages of the body our end and happiness, our reasons then are not only *needless* but *hurtful*; especially when they are employ'd upon the highest and noblest objects.

Besides, 'Tis not agreeing with the divine wisdom, as 'tis discover'd in the whole *Analogy* of things, to make such noble faculties for so low and mean services: All things have their proportion in the œconomy of God, and are in *number, weight and measure*: every thing is suited to its design and end: And hence we may conclude that our Reasons were intended for *more* than the little business of this inferiour life, and that there is *another* in which it shall be becomingly employ'd, and gloriously improv'd.

II. Our **passions** in the present temper of them, afford us evidence of another Life and Being. As to which, we may consider them, (1) in their *natural disorders*; and (2.) in the *regulation* of them by *reason* and *virtue*.

1. Let us reflect a little upon their present *disorders*. In our first and growing years we are unavoidably led by *Sense* and *bodily* affections: and before *Reason* comes to any considerable degree of exercise, our *passions* are commonly too strong to be govern'd by it. Yea, they maintain war

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against



against the Laws of the mind; and lead us into captivity to the Law of sin and death, Rom. 7. They fight against reason and one another, and make a tempestuous troubled Sea within us, *Isa.* 27. 20. so that we are driven by them upon Rocks and quicksands, and our peace and happiness is made a prey to the waves, *Isa.* 48. 22. All the evils of the world bear testimony to this Reign of passion: and the History of all ages is full of the sad issues of violent affections.

Which things do plainly prove, that *this* is not the *only*, or the *proper* Life of man. For certainly Reason was intended to be the ruling principle in reasonable creatures, and this Reign of passion is an usurpation in our natures, that must not last *always*. Passion is well defin'd by Zeno to be an *unnatural, over-boiling motion*: and 'tis not credible, that reasonable creatures should during their *whole* being, continue under violent hurries, and brutish force. 'Tis not to be suppos'd that our light shall always be darkned in an Eclipse, and muffled up in clouds; the Moon and Stars may rule the night, but if there be a Sun there must be a day, in which it shall govern. Reason will have its time of Rule; as Sense and Passion have had theirs; and that must be in another world, for there is but little of it in *this*. I say little of it, but some there is; and the Empire of Conscience is begun in the

the *vertuous*. This is the other thing in the temper of our Passions to be consider'd, *viz.*

2. The Regulation of them by *virtue* and Reason. This is the *beginning* of a new Life; a Life proper for men; which in the best is weak and defective *here*; and arrives not to any very considerable height of perfection; hence also we may conclude that there is *another* Life, in which those divine inchoations shall be compleated. For as from the obscure discoveries of Sense, in an Infant in the Womb, we may argue there is another state, wherein the sensitive faculties that have begun to shew themselves, shall act with more advantage and perfection; In like manner those *Essays* of the soul towards a better Life in the *vertuous*, is an Argument that indeed there *is one*; and that this *present* state is but the *Womb* of the future.

These are the first draughts of the divine nature, and Image; and God will not suffer it to die in imperfect rudiments. The blushes of the morning are an earnest of an ensuing day. The *Chaldee* Oracles call *these* the *Tokens* and *Symbols* that God hath inserted in the Soul; they are the *first-fruits*, and no doubt the *harvest* will follow. The tendencies of *lower* nature do not use to be altogether in *vain*; much less shall the beginnings of the *divine* Life, and the resemblances of the



immortal Deity. *All life is immortal, saith Plato, and certainly the seed of this noble and spiritual one shall not perish. God will not leave his Image in the grave, nor suffer this spark of him to see corruption.*

The summ is, The Regulation and Government of *Passion*, is a new Life begun; the *ἀληθὴς Ζωὴ*, the true, proper rational Life (as *Plotinus* calls it) but in this world 'tis very incompleat and defective; and therefore there is another, in which it shall grow up to the fulness of its stature and perfection.

I come in order to argue the same, III. From our **Desires** and **Appetites** in two instances, viz. (1.) Their *dissatisfactions* with the things of the present World; and (2) some *Tendencies* of them towards another.

1. I begin with the *unsatisfiedness* of them. Our desires are too wide for our enjoyments; and there is a thirst in the soul that is unsatiable. When we have one thing we want another, and our appetites are always craving. There is not bread for the hungry soul, nor any fitting entertainment on this side the Sun: We flatter our selves with fancied satisfactions at distance, but when we come near we find not the happiness and content we expected. And as Children think that at such a Hill they should touch the Skies: so we  
phancy

phancy that in compassing such, or such designs we should be happy; but when that is done, we see as much beyond us, and learn that in appetities there is no Term or *Horizon*.

Now these dissatisfactions with the things of the present world (which are no *sullen* or *Cynick* humours, but the complaint of all mankind) afford an Argument of much probability, that we were not made for this state *only*; nor *chiefly* for it. For all Faculties are *satisfied* with the due measures of their *proper* objects; and every thing rests in its own *Element*: And therefore the *restlessness* and *inquietudes* of men in the *present* Life are an Argument that we are not yet where we should be, but that we were design'd to live again in *another*: Which reason we may improve by this further observation: namely, that the *better* any man is, the *less* he is pleased with these perishing enjoyments. The noise of Fame, the pleasures of Sense, and the pageantry of worldly greatness, are to Him like the Rattles and Cherystones of his Child-hood; He hath lost his taste and relish of such entertainments. And now, if all the delights and comforts we are to expect, were of *this* sort, the *best* men are in the *worst* condition, in *losing* all their share of their *proper* pleasure and felicity; and living *without* taste among so many relishing enjoyments.

2. The



2. The *Bent* of the *desires* of Good men *towards another world*, is a probable inducement to believe, *There is another*. Indeed the greatest part of mankind is so miserably sunk into earth and sense, that they feel no such tendencies or propensions, but rather averseness to all things that do not gratifie the body, and serve its interests: But yet there are those who have strong inclinations towards another Life; and the *more vertuous* any man is, the *earnester* will his desires be after the state of Immortality: which importunities and cravings of their souls, give us some ground to think, that there is another world, and objects in it suited to their desires: Otherwise those appetites would be in *vain*, and the *best* would be *most miserable*, while they quitted other satisfactions, and grasp'd after air and delusion,

I come now to the last head of proof.

IV. Our **Instincts**; or some *natural propensions* of universal mankind. The instances I shall name are two, (1.) The *general* belief and acknowledgement of another Life. (2.) The common *desire* of *Memory* after death.

1. For the first, the Doctrine of a *Life to Come*, hath not been the opinion only of concern'd *Priests*, or designing *Politicians*; of melancholy *Superstitionists*, or distracted *Enthusiasts*. It hath not been the conceit of a *single Age*, nor confin'd

fin'd within the limits of *one* Country or Region, but is as *general* as the Light, and spread as far as the utmost bounds of the reasonable nature. For those that are strangers to one another Laws and Customs, and as different in their natures as they are distant in their Climes; yet all alike concur in the expectation, and belief of a future Being. The cold *Russian*, and scorch'd *Moor*; the barbarous *American*, and spruce *Gracian*; the soft *Chinese*, and the rough *Tartar*, though vastly different in all other things, yet they agree in *this*, *That there is another world*, and that we are *immortal*. And 'tis the observation of *Pliny*, that those barbarous people that have neither *Cloathes* to cover their nakedness, nor *Laws* for a common security; that live by the Rules of *ferity* and *lust*, and differ from the Beasts, *seemingly*, in little else but external shape; that have neither Towns nor Houses, and but *just reason* enough to provide for the necessities of nature; yet *these* live in expectation and belief of a *Life after this*; And the latter improvements of Navigation, and remote discoveries, confirm the same in the farthest darkest parts of the habitable Earth.

Now this *general effect* must have some *general cause*, which cannot be any *general deception*; For it is not morally possible, that those who are at so vast a distance in place, and nature, and all other



other circumstances, should agree in a common deceit, and jump in the same imposture. It must arise then either from some universal *explicite Revelation*, or an universal *Instinct*, or voice of nature. If the former be granted, 'tis full proof of the assertion: or if that be not, 'tis the other, which seems most *probable*, viz. that God hath inserted it into our reasonable *natures*; or by his providence hath conveyed it into the minds of all men, which is *Tanamt* unto it. And so we are carried to this belief, as the *Lamb* is to the *Dugg*: or other creatures to the food or work of their particular *natures*.

On this account *Aristotle* sets it down for a Rule, *ὅτι πάντα δοκεῖ πάντες ἴδιον εἶναι*, and *Cicero* saith the same, *Quod omnibus videtur, est*. That which seems to all, is. For what ever is so *universal*, is from *God*, who cannot deceive, or be mistaken.

2. The desire of *Memory* after death is an *Instinct* in mankind: and whether the former be so properly, or not, this is certainly *such*: All way have been taken to perpetuate mens *Names* and *Memories*; *Children* and great *Houses*, and noble *Deeds*, and *Books*, and *Monuments*; yea, and as if *Earth* wanted things sufficiently *lasting* to satisfy this appetite of *Immortality*; men have placed themselves in the regions of incorruption, and have called the *Stars* by their own names.

Now

Now this universal *thirst* after such an *imaginary Immortality* is an inducement to believe, there is a *real one*: Since did we *cease to be*, as soon as we die and disappear to this world, such an appetite would be unreasonable and ridiculous: For why should we desire a *precarious* being in a name and memory, if our *true selves* were so shortly to be nothing? Of what concernment is it to us to be remembred, if in a few days all things should be forgotten for ever: and we were to go into an eternal silence and oblivion? What would a *Stone* be the better for being accounted one of the *Ancient Pillars of Seth*? or a piece of *wood* in being esteemed a *Sacred Relique of the Cross*? The sum is, Mankind hath an appetite of *post-humous Memory*, which would be *senseless*, and to no purpose if there be no *Life* but this: Now God implants no *Instincts* in his creatures that are *futiles* and in *vain*; and therefore hence also we may conclude, that there is a *Future Being*.

I have now done with the Arguments on which I intended to insist: After all, I cannot say that each of them is an absolute *demonstration*; or that the evidence of every one is such as is impossible to be avoided: there are few proofs of that nature: But this I do, that all of them together will, I think, make a cord hardly to be broken: And these considerations in conjunction may amount to a



*moral demonstration*, and have force enough to obtain assent from those that are not stupid or unreasonable.

But yet the *strongest* proofs are those from the *Scripture*, and all the *Arguments* that demonstrate the *Truth of Christianity*, prove also the *certainty of a Life after this*. For one of the great designs of the *Holy Jesus*, was to bring *Immortality to light*, and (as I noted before) he gave *visible evidence of a future existence by his own Resurrection*. So that those that could not *reason and dispute*, and see truth at distance in principles, might however be convinced by a *Demonstration to the Sense*; and those that could not be fully assured by the *reasonings of Philosophers*, which many of them were very deep, and many *uncertain*, and many *unsound and false*, might yet be persuaded by the *miracles* which were wrought by Christ and his Apostles to confirm those *Doctrines*, which they taught, of *rewards and punishments in another Life*; And that there are *such*, every thing in the whole Gospel either *supposeth or proves*.

These I say, are the *clearest and best* evidence, but they are such as are *obvious* to every understanding, and cannot receive more light than what they have at first sight in themselves: I therefore omit that sort of proof, as not *needed* by those that *embrace the Scripture*; and for others that believe it not, the  
Reasons

Reasons taken thence will be of no force with such men.

I have also designedly omitted the Arguments that arise from the nature of the Soul, Philosophically consider'd, for the reason mention'd in the beginning, viz. because they are speculative and nice; and so not proper for such discourses as *this*; nor are they usually of much force upon the mind.

**I** Come II. to shew the **Causes** and **Occasions** of mens not believing a future state. The chief are such as these,

1. The *Wickedness* and *Debauchery* of the Unbelievers: the horrid sins of their *present* lives make them afraid of *another*. They are resolv'd on the course of vanity and folly while they live, and would have *all* to end here. They will crown themselves with *Rosebuds*, and leave tokens of their mirth in *every* place; they'll let no *Flower* of the Spring pass by them, nor lose any part of voluptuousness: and this they would have to be their whole portion, and their only lot to be *this*. Away then ye melancholick dreams, and troublesome fancies of another world! ye are an offence unto us, and savour not the things that are of jollity and good humour: ye damp our joyes, and put bitterness into the sweetest draught of pleasure: Therefore away to Cloysters and Cells; and dwell



there among the superstitious and the ignorant; but leave *us* the liberty of our thoughts, and the satisfaction of our enjoyments. This is the *reasoning*, if not the language of the Sadducee. He is *not willing* that there *should* be another Life, and therefore *perswades* himself that there *is not any*: He would not meet himself again, nor have such a restraint upon his appetites, as the dread of an *after-reckoning*. *The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God*, Psal. 14. 1. it follows, *They are become abominable*.

Vice is at the root of Atheism and unbelief: *Sensuality* drowns all the noble conceptions of the Soul, and fills it with *foul* and *bestial* imaginations. It ties mens thoughts down to *present* and *sensible* things, and hinders their prospect into the *Regions of Immortality*. It makes them *like* to the objects of their pleasures, and renders them unable to resent *future* and *spiritual* satisfactions; they can form no *Idea* of any thing *agreeable* to them in the other world: all things *there* are *uneasie* and *unrelishing* at the *best*; and the *worst* is not to be endured. So that they bend their force to erase all impressions of so *ungrateful* a Doctrine; in which, at last, through the power of their endeavours, and the co-operation of Satan, they effectually prevail; and cast off all belief and expectation of any future Being. Another cause of which is,

2. *Vain*

2. *Vain-glory*, and a proud affectation to be something extraordinary. *Vain men would be Wits*, and soar above the height of other mortals: Their Eagle-sight is sharp and piercing, and they espy the deceits and impostures, that the rest of mankind are too dull to descry! They despise the common Doctrines, and proudly pity, or laugh at the easiness of others, who suffer themselves to be sway'd by them; and by how much the more sacred the truths are which they reject, by so much greater, they reckon, is the honour of their own sagacity, in finding out the deceit, by which so many have been abus'd and misled.

These are *Wits* in an instant; at the top, before they have taken the first step; and perfect in knowledge as soon, and some of them before they have begun. If their accomplishments be measur'd by their confidence and their scorn, they are the greatest Wits among men; but if by their judgement and real knowledge, they (of any) have not the least pretence to that title. For though they may gain the glory among their easie companions, by opposing the great acknowledgements of Religion, and particularly this; yet they will never by such ways obtain it from those who are really that, which they affect to be thought. It is the known observation of one who held a high place among the Wits of his Age, That a little Philosophy and  
know



knowledge inclines men to be *Infidels* and *Atheists*, but the greater measures set the mind right in Religion, and secure it from the danger of those impieties : So that who takes *this* way to be accounted a *Wit*, makes himself a *Fool* to the *wise*; without gaining the reputation of being *wise* among other *Fools* besides those of his own sort. Or if he could attain the height of that ambition, 'twould prove a very *dear* credit, that is purchased upon such terms, as are the ruine of his soul, the destruction of his best hopes, and the degrading of his noble nature.

3. Another main occasion of *Infidelity* in this Article, is *Enthusiasm*, or the entertainment of Principles of Faith upon the credit of phancies: Dangerous is the case of Religion, when *Reason* is thrown by, and detested; and the whole streis laid upon *warm imaginations*. *These* indeed will hold up the mind for a while, in great confidence of another world, and fill it with a thousand extravagant *images* and *chimera's* about it, which will be all taken for *clear light* and *solemn certainties*, while the wind sits right: But then alas! anon the scene alters, and a change in the habit of the body disposeth the man to *other thoughts*; and so all is flung away as *delusion*; and the *Enthusiast* is strongly carried down by the over-bearing of his *melancholy*, into the doleful conceit of his

morta-

mortality, and the belief that he shall die like the Beasts that perish. And that that humour disposeth men naturally to such apprehensions, we may see in Job, who spake in the trouble of his spirit, and in the bitterness of his mind, he said, There is hope of a Tree if it be cut down, that it will sprout, and the branches thereof will not cease — But man is sick, and dieth, and man perisheth, and where is he? Job 14. He seems to speak in this and other passages like an Epicurean, or a Sadducee: and the question looks comfortless and discouraging, ver. 14. If a man die, shall he live again? The good man was under the disorder of a great and just sadness, and that represented all things as dark and dismal to his wounded phancy, and seem'd sometimes to deprive him of the only remaining comfort, the hope of a better condition in another world. The same effects hath melancholy still upon many Euthusiastick tempers, on some of which it prevails so far, as to fix those impressions on their minds, which never are worn off. And though Job recover'd quickly by the exercise of his Faculties, and the reason that God had given him, and expresseth his expectation of a Future Life, immediately after the passage of greatest doubt (*All the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come*). Yet those whose principles are fastned only by their phancies, and the impulse of present



present belief, are in great danger to be *lost* in such temptations.

Thus are some men disposed to Infidelity by their own *Enthusiasms*, and the same too frequently give occasion to others to laugh at the belief of a future Being, by representing that state in various shapes, and under very odd disguises.

I Am next to shew,

III. What the denial of a future Life *infers*, in the *reasoning* and *consequence* of it.

1. It follows hence, that man is but a *better beast*; and those Wits speak agreeably to this principle, that (whether in *earnest* or in *jest*) Satyrize humane nature, and represent us only as somewhat a more cunning Herd of Cattle. For if *this Life* be *all*, we have the same end and happiness with the *bruits*; and they are *happier* of the two, in that they have lesser cares, and fewer disappointments than we. Our *Reason* and *Religion*, upon which we so much value our selves, according to this doctrine, are but *chains* of *imagination*s; and *those* but *refined* sense: and so the *soul* and *principle* of action, is no other in *us*, than it is in *them*; and we differ but little more than one sort of Beasts doth from another; namely, than the more *stupid* doth from those that are more *sprightly* and *sagacious*. And then farewell the *Prerogatives* and  
dignity

dignity of humane nature. Man is but a Beast of prey, and his use of and dominion over the other creatures, is but a proud usurpation over his equals. So that this opinion degrades our natures, and affronts the whole race of mankind together. And,

2. In the direct tendency of it, it destroyes humane Societies; For those cannot subsist without Laws; nor Laws without some conscience of good and evil, nor would this signifie to any great purpose, without the belief of another world. Take away this, and every thing will be good that is profitable, and honest that conduceth to a mans designs. That would be mine that I could get by force; and I had no right to any thing longer than I had strength to defend it: and thus the world would be *ipso facto* in a state of war, and fall into endless confusions and disorders. So that the whole Earth would quickly be an Hell intolerable; every man would be a Devil to another, yea and every man to himself.

3. It suppresseth mens private happiness and felicity; and even the Rioters of the world have stings and torments from it. If a man live in Sensuality and fulness of pleasure, what a cutting thought is it to consider, that in a little time he must bid adieu to this, and to all felicity for ever? And if his life be in trouble and discomfort; how



terrible is it to reflect, that he must go from being *miserable* to be *nothing*? How can those think of parting with their possessions and enjoyments, that have *nothing* else to expect? or, how can they bear up under the burdens and vexations of this state, that cannot relieve themselves by the hopes of a *better*? With what sad pangs of sorrow should we lay our Friends into the Grave; if we had cause to be assured that they were *lost eternally*? and how could we reflect upon our own *mortality*, if we were to look for no *farther* Being? The pleasures of the *present* Life are gone in a moment, and leave nothing but dregs and bitterness behind them; and if there be no further delights besides these *mean* and *fading* satisfactions, 'tis not worth the while to live; but we had better to have been nothing for ever.

The summ is, The *Sadducee* vilifies Mankind, destroyes the peace of Societies, and the happiness of every private person: and so professeth himself the common enemy of *men*, and a *Renegado* to humane nature.

**I**T will not be needful for me to say much in *Applying* this Discourse; Almost every Sermon we hear, is an Application of it: for *here* is the matter and ground of our hopes, and hence are taken the great enforcements of our duty.

I pre-

I presume there are few, or none, in this place, but who are ready to profess their *belief* of a *Future Life*, and ( as I premised ) I have not insisted on the proof, to perswade *You* of this Article; but to shew, that the confidence is groundless, which affirms, *There is no reason* for the great Doctrines of Religion; and to contribute somewhat towards the settlement of the weak, against such temptations.

Now if we *believe* this great Truth, as we say; Let us do it to purpose; and not content our selves with a cold and customary assent, but endeavour to raise our Faith to such an height, that it may have an effectual influence upon our lives. The general belief that education hath infused, is but a *dead image* in the soul that produceth nothing: Let us endeavour by fervent *Prayer*, and frequent *Meditation* to invigorate and excite *ours* to that degree; that it may be a *living representation* of eternal things; that our Faith may be the *certainty* and *presence* of the *invisible* world. The *substance of things hoped for*, the *evidence of things not seen*, Heb. 11. That we may have such an apprehension of it, as if the prospect were open, and our eyes beheld it; that we may fix our thoughts there, and fill up our souls with the consideration of that world.

Such a Faith as *this*, ought to be our aim; and

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if



if we did *so* believe the other world; what excellent, what heroical, what happy persons should we be in this? Such a Faith would secure us from the flatteries and temptations of this sensual life; and excite us to more earnest longings, and more vigorous endeavours after the happiness of a better: It would inable us to despise this vain world in comparison; and to bear all the crosses of it, with magnanimity and steadiness of mind: It would quiet our sollicitudes, and answer the objections against providence, and the present unequal distribution of good and evil. It would make the most difficult services of Religion easie and pleasant to us; and fill our lives with sweet hope, and delights infinitely more agreeable than the most relishing sensual joys: It would afford us satisfaction, amid our disappointments; and rest amid our anxieties and cares: It would raise our designs and thoughts to things generous and noble, and make us live like the Inhabitants of an Heavenly Countrey.

Such blessed effects as *these* follow *this* Faith *here*; and unmeasurably, unspeakably *greater* in the other world; the vision of God, and full enjoyment of His love; the perfection of our natures, and the compleatment of our happiness; in the arms of our Redeemer, and amidst the triumphant Songs of Angels and Saints; in the exercise of holy love, admiring

admiration and praise: Things too great to be  
express'd, or to be imagin'd, *For eye hath not seen, nor  
ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to con-  
ceive, what God hath reserved for those that love him :*  
To Him be all Glory, and humble Adoration  
henceforth and for ever.



ALICE: (entering) I have just received  
a letter from my mother. She is  
very ill and wishes to see me.  
I must go at once. (Exit)

SERMON VII.  
THE  
Serious Consideration  
OF THE  
*Future Judgement.*

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*The Second Edition.*

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SERMON VII.

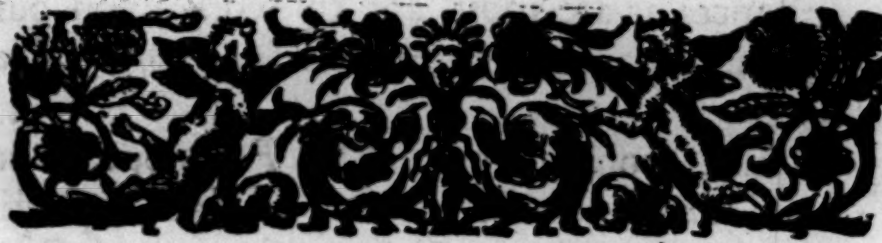
THE

Scriptural Foundation

OF THE

Church of England

By the Rev. J. H. Sturt.



# SERMON VII.

ACTS XVII. 31.

— Because he hath appointed a day, in which he will judge the World in Righteousness, by the man whom he hath ordained —

**A**Lthough it might be well expected that the Laws of God should abundantly prevail by vertue of His *Authority*, and their own *native reason* and *goodness*; Yet such is the *stupidity* and *perversefness* of men, that *these* alone have not (usually) any considerable effect upon us: And therefore God who earnestly desires our Reformation, and our happiness, hath superadded the greatest *Sanctions* to enforce His Laws, glorious *rewards* on the one hand, and most terrible *Penalties* on the other, and *these* to be distributed in a most solemn manner, represented in such cir-

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cumstances as are most apt to work upon our Hopes and Fears: For ——— *He hath appointed a day.* ———

Which words are part of St. Paul's Speech to the *Athenians* upon the occasion of their superstitions and Idolatries: *These* in the time of Gentile ignorance God *winked at*, *verse 30.* *immediatly* He took no notice of those sins ( in comparison ) He was not so much offended and displeased, but consider'd the general ignorance, and temptations, and made abatements for them. As our Saviour said with reference to the Jews, *Joh. 15. 22.* *If I had not come and spoken to them, they had not had sin;* Their sin had not been so great, or so inexcusable; nor would it have been charged upon them with such severity of condemnation. But now that the *Light hath shined in darkness*, the true *Light that enlightens every one that cometh into the world;* Now since the Son of God is made manifest, to destroy the works of the Devil, and to turn men from those superstitious and idolatrous vanities to the right worship of God in *Spirit* and in *Truth*: The plea of ignorance will no longer excuse or extenuate, but God commands all men every where to Repent, which is inforc'd with the most powerful consideration of the Text,

————— *He hath appointed a day* —————

In which words we have these things,

(1.) The

(1.) The Declaration of a future Judgement, *Because he hath appointed a day, in which he will judge*—

(2.) The universality of the Subject to be Judg'd, *the World.*

(3.) The Person that is to be the judge;—  
*The man whom He hath ordained.*

(4.) The rule and manner of Judgement,  
*He will Judge the World in Righteousness.*

**I** Begin in order with the Decree of a future Judgement. Of this the Heathens had some obscure notions, as appears among other things, by the stories of their fam'd Judges, that were to call men to account in the other world. But these were but *glimmering* apprehensions: 'Tis the Gospel hath brought to light the great Doctrine of a coming Judgement, in the solemnity and circumstances of it.

This hath declared, That there is to be a Judgement Day, Matth. 10. 15. Jude 6. That Christ Jesus is to be the Judge of the quick and the dead; Acts 10. 42. That he shall be revealed from Heaven with his mighty Angels, in flaming fire, 2 Thes. 1. 8. That he shall come with ten thousand of his Saints, Jude 14. That he shall judge the secrets of men according to the Gospel, Rom. 2. 16. That the Dead shall be all raised by a General summons,

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1 Cor. 15. 52. and all shall be judg'd according to their works, Rev. 20. 13. The just to eternal life, and the wicked to everlasting punishment, Matth. 25. 46.

So that the belief of a Judgement Day, is no panick fear or melancholy dream: 'Tis no trick of Politicians, or Momo of Priests to fright fools and keep the world in awe, but a Truth as certain and undoubted as the Oracles of Truth can make it: 'Tis plainly declar'd in the most infallible Records; yea, 'tis engraven on the minds of universal mankind, who all expect a call to a future Judgement.

There is therefore no need of further proof of so clear and so acknowledg'd an Article; But it may be worth our while to consider what may be the Reasons of this appointment of a Judgement Day. And the same will serve as Arguments to confirm and enforce our Faith in it.

(1.) Then, 'Tis reasonable and fit there should be a General Judgement, that Religion may be vindicated and cleared. The Gospel was of old to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks, foolishness, 1 Cor. 1. 23. and we know, by sad experience, how in latter days, Religion is expos'd and scorn'd. It is made ridiculous by some, and laugh'd at by others; and which do it the greater mischief, Those that put it into contemptible cloathing;

ing; or those that pour direct contempt upon it, is not our present business to conjecture. This is certain, that there is nothing hath been pretended in so many vile actions and designs; Nothing in which mankind have been, in any comparison, so out of their wits, as in what they have abusively call'd by this Sacred Name. Religion! we have seen it dy'd with humane blood, and swoln with spoil and rapine: written on the foreheads of tyrannies and usurpations, and pleaded as the CAUSE, the CAUSE of prosperous Villanies. Divided into Atoms of Sects, and disputed into Air of opinions: Entitled to all the vanities of sick imagination, and claim'd by all the follies of zealous ignorance.

And is it not reasonable there should be a time, wherein this over-cast, this clouded light should brighten like the Sun at noon; and dispel those spots and that scum, which superstition, ignorance and hypocrisie have fastned upon its glorious Face? Is it not fit that the Gospel should at length appear to have been the power of God, and no creature of melancholy or design? Ought it not to be at last confest and known, that Religion was a great Reality, and no cunningly devised Fable? No dream of imagination, or interest of any lust; but as simple as Innocence, and as clear as the virgin light? And it will be so in the



the coming day, when the light of the other World hath shone in upon the darkness of this.

In summ, 'Tis just to expect that Religion will be gloriously celebrated and cleared, and reasonable to believe it will be done by the solemnity of a Judgement day.

(2.) A Future Judgement is ordain'd, That Providence may be unridled and absolv'd. The Judgements of God are a great Deep, Psal. 36. 6. and His ways past finding out, Rom. 11. 33. The affairs of Providence are full of Mystery and Meanders, as dark as the midnights of December, and as crooked as the paths of the Desert. All the Lines of our spinning, all our observations and reasonings are too short to lead us to and fro the Labyrinth. The world is govern'd by secret methods that are beyond our most improved knowledge. How are we puzzl'd when we undertake to gloss on Providence, and presume to give the reasons of its most ordinary managements ! The wicked lift up their heads against Heaven and prosper; and the just bow the knee; lifting up their hands unto it, and are undone: Folly succeeds, and is applauded, and Wisdom is disappointed and contemn'd; Clouds and thick darkness encompass the devout, and a warm Sun shines upon him that sacrificeth not  
(Eccl.

(Eccl. 7. 15.) And when vice thrives, and folly triumphs, Providence is pleaded to credit ignorance and impiety, and the success of the actions vouches for the goodness of the Cause. God is thought to have *own'd* what, for unknown reasons, he hath *permitted*, and to have *acted that*, which in judgement he hath *suffer'd*. On the other hand, the best Designs are thought *wicked* when they prove *unprosperous*, and the *whitest* Innocence marked with *black* characters, when the cloud is upon it. Thus *Shimei* accused *David* for a man of blood, because of the evils of his House, 2 Sam. 16. 7. And *Job* was concluded as great an instance of sin, as he was of misery, Job 4. The *Barbarians* inferr'd from the *Viper*, that *St. Paul* was a *Murderer*, Acts 28. 3, 4. And the unbelieving world from the *Cross*, that the *Holy Jesus* was a *Malefactor*.

Thus do men shoot one another out of this crooked bow, and judge the goodness and badness of things by *successes*, not by *Rules*; and thereby traduce and abuse Providence by making it speak the language of their affections, and their Interests, and serve the ends of malice, and Self-love.

Which things being so in the present world, it is fit that, at last, Providence should be disentangled and absolv'd, that all the world may see the



the living creatures in the *Wheels*, Ezek. 1. 20. and the eye that is in the Scepter, as the *Ægyptian Hieroglyphicks* represented Providence. That we may at length understand, that its *ways are equal*, Ezek. 18. 25. and that all the seeming inequalities prove the shortness of our Reasonings, not the unevenness of its managements; that its *strangest*, and least accountable issues were the Results of Counsel, and govern'd by an infinitely wise mind that shoots it self through all things. That we may understand the difference between good and *prosperous*; and the reason of the distance between *vertue* and *success*. Why the fire out of the *Bramble* is permitted to devour the *Cedar*; and the *desert* of the *wicked* is so often the lot of the *just*.

These expectations are reasonable, and in a manner necessary; that mankind may be convinced the events below were not *Lotteries*, but ~~desires just~~ full of Providence; and that Providence acted by an infinite Wisdom, Justice, and Goodness. That wickedness shall, at last, reap the misery it hath sown, and dwell in the flames it hath kindled: And afflicted Vertue lift up its head to receive the Crown and the Glories that are the rewards of its patience; and appear to have shot it self up in another world, when it was deprest in this. And so all shall know that there was a God that judged in the Earth, Psal. 58. 11. And

And this is another reasonable account of the appointment of a Future Judgement.

(3.) We may suppose it to be ordain'd for this also, *That secret wickedness may be disclos'd, and shamed.* The Heart of man is as *deep waters*, hath a smooth surface, but is full of rocks and quicksands at the bottom. The world is a Theatre, and the greatest part of men are but Actors: For as *They* cloathe themselves with Gold and Purple, and put on great names, and are fine things upon the Stage, when behind the Curtain and in their retirements, they are but common men, and like their ordinary Spectators: Thus we dress our selves for publique converses, set our looks, and gild our language, and put on the Livery of Wisdom and Saintship, and appear what we would be *thought*, not what we *are*: But in our privacies, and more familiar conversations, in the loose and unconstrain'd order of our words, and our actions, we are quite another thing; we are foolish and frivolous, froward and impatient, sordid and absurd: And in the secret Chambers of our souls we are worse. The fairest face would affright us, if the skin were taken off it, and shew us nothing but ghastliness and deformity: And it would amaze us to see the *In-sides* of those, whose *outward* appearance is fair and plausible. We now

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seek



seek coverings for our shame, and hide our follies and imperfections under handsome names, devout shews, and fair pretensions; or excuse them by *Necessity, Temptation, the Devil, or Providence.* And though we see much sin and vileness as soon as we open our eyes, and look out of doors: Yet there is another and a worse world of wickedness, shut up from our sight, and hid in its own darkness; in close designs and private actions; in the corners of the heart, and recesses of thoughts: These make up a dark Region cover'd with fear and shame, and the shadows of death; open only to Him to whom all things are so, and midnight is as bright as noon, (*Psal. 139. 12.*) And he will provide that so it shall be to all the world; that all sin may be as odious, as it is ugly; and unobserv'd impiety may not still lie hid in the secrecy and silence it hath sought: But that its whispers may be proclaim'd by a voice more loud than Thunder; and its conceal'd deformities be brought into the open day: That those hidden iniquities which hitherto have escap'd, may be whipt with the scorpions of guilt and shame; and the divine purity and patience may appear in their Glory and proper lustre.

And for this Reason also God hath appointed a Day wherein He will Judge the secrets of men: That sin may not be the more secure, for being

being close; But that it may be feared and shunn'd in Grotts, as well as in most publique places.

And I may add, That those actions of vertue that no eye sees, but that which sees all things, and those unknown tendencies and anhelations of divine souls after the adorable object of their Love, may be solemnly celebrated and rewarded. Again,

(4.) Such a Day is fit and is appointed, *that all rights and claims may be determined.* The great Controversies are, *which, and where is the True Church and Religion.* And if we attend to the Zeal, and the confidence, the loud talk, and bold claims of each of the pretenders, All are in the truth, and All mistaken: Every Sect is in the right, if it may be judg'd by the fondness of its own assurance; and every one is out, by the sentence of all the rest: Here's Religion, sayes one; Nay, but it's here, sayes the next; and a *third* gives the Lie to them both; And then they scuffle and contend till they have talk'd themselves out of sense, out of charity, and out of breath: And when they would say on, but know not what; when their passions are rais'd, but their Reasons lost; They fall to pelt each other with hard names; They squabble, and strive, and damn one another by turns; They gather parties to help up the Cry,

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and



and fill all places with the noise of their quarrels, and triumph and crow after a conquest in Imagination: And after all this bustle, and all this ado, *They* sit down where they began; Nothing is gain'd on either side, but an addition of malice and bitter zeal, more rancour, and more damning sentences, while they are, for the most part, as far from *Truth* as from agreement.

This is the state of the contending world, nor can we expect it should be otherwise, while Ignorance and Malice, Interest and Passion inspire the quarrels. Or, if Controversies should be ended, the Vote would, doubtless, be cast on the side of Folly and Falshood, for their adherents are most numerous, and most loud; while the friends of *Truth* and *Reason* are meek and modest, thinly scatter'd among the Herd, and still liable to be over-born, and out-nois'd by the Tumult.

But the coming Day will set all right; and effectually resolve *Pilate's* Question, *What is Truth?* And then no doubt, The meek and the peaceable, the charitable and the just, who did not dispute, but live; who were not swoln with rage and notions, but big of Charity, and universal kindness for mankind: Then shall *These* be declar'd the rightful Heirs of the Kingdom, when

when the presumed Sons of it, who hugg'd themselves, as the only favourites of Heaven, and warm'd their hands by their own fantastick Fires, who flew aloft on the wings of Imagination, and proudly look'd down upon the modest and humble Believer; who were full of mysterie and rapture, scorn and talk, but void of justice, modesty and love: *These*, we have reason to think, shall then be cast out, and receive their portion with the *Pharisee*, to the shame and disappointment of their confidence, and their hopes.

In this Day shall the Errours, and the follies that were recommended to the deceiv'd embraces of the Sons of men, by frauds, and Art, paint, and meretricious bravery, be expos'd in their naked Deformities to the sight and contempt of all the world: And that *Truth*, and those *Vertues* that were persecuted into Corners, and cover'd with dust and shame; torn piece-meal by wrath and ignorance, and scatter'd up and down in the Tents of Errour, shall then be brought into the Light, and cleansed from all debasing mixtures, and represented in their native loveliness and beauty, that they may receive the praises and acclamations of their ancient friends, and acquaintance; Yea, and the acknowledgements of their now blushing and confounded enemies.

Upon



Upon the whole we see, That the Faith of a Future Judgement is not misbecoming the severest Sons of Reason and Philosophy, but is infinitely agreeable to the faculties of men, and the Analogy of things.

I Come now to the SECOND main thing in the Text,

II. The *Universality* of the Subject to be judged, the **world**, so it is here; And the Scripture elsewhere expresseth it in very general terms: The secrets of men, Rom. 2. 16. Every man, Rev. 20. 13. The Dead, small and great, Rev. 20. 12. The quick and the dead, 1 Pet. 4. 5.

Now I shall consider the *Universality* of the Subject of Judgement in two great solemnities of it: viz. The General Summons, and the General Resurrection that follows: both mentioned together, 1 Cor. 15. 52. The trumpet shall sound, and the Dead shall be raised——

1. The Trumpet; either some divine universal virtue; or the voice of some mighty Angel, crying, Arise ye Dead, and come to Judgement. Methinks I hear that voice; 'tis full of Majesty and terrour; 'tis more loud than Fame, and more general than the Light of Heaven. 'Tis heard at both the Poles; in the Earth, and Sea, and Air, and all Deep places.

Attend, Attend, Ye Sons of Adam! Ye that are  
afar

afar off, and ye that are near; Ye that begun with the Infernal World, and ye that liv'd in its latest Periods; Ye that freeze under the uncomfortable North, and ye that are hid under the remotest South; Ye that dwell in the temperate Regions; and ye that are scorched with the heats of the Line; Ye that only cry'd, and ceas'd to breathe; and ye that went slowly and late to the Grave; Ye that are yet alive, and ye that have been Ages under ground.

*Hearken, Hearken* to the Proclamation of the great King, the Prince of Glory, the Judge of Angels and Men: The Day, the Day of vengeance and recompence is come, the Day of Terrours and of Triumphs. The night is past: Arise ye dead, cease sleeping in the Grave; Put on our bodies, gather up your scatter'd parts, summon your thoughts together, and make up your Accounts. The Tribunal is set, the Judge is coming. And ye living Inhabitants, lay by your designs, let fall your Traffique; quit your pleasures and pursuits; the time for these is done, *for ever* done; Eternity is in view; Trim your Lamps, the Bridegroom is at the door.

2. And now the General Resurrection follows. Behold the closest Vaults throw away their coverings, and disclose the proud Families that lay hid in that stately darkness: See how the loose Earth  
moves



moves about the Cloysters of the Dead, and the Grave opens all its doors to enlarge its Prisoners : And lo, a numerous people riseth from under ground to attend the great Assize of Angels and men ! They arise, but are not yet alive ; Death sits upon their faces clad in dread and paleness. They lose that motion with astonishment which they gained with their restored parts ; and are ready to be shaken into their former dust, by the fear that hath seized their unsettled joynts : They wonder at the Light, and at themselves ; and are ready to drop back into the Graves, from which they just peep'd out.

See here the *mighty* sits trembling by his Monument, unconcern'd at the vain Epithets it gave to his flatter'd Memory ; and the *delicate* sighs with his first breath, willing to return to darkness, rottenness, and worms ; rather than to the light that will discover the guilt, and the follies of a Life of vanity and sin. The *Hypocrite* droops to consider that his painting and his shame are to be brought out of the night and silence of the Grave, into a naked, and open day ; and the *Witius* dies again to think, That he hath taken up his body from one Death to carry it to another, and a worse. Thus the world of the *wicked* shall all appear, and all be concern'd in the Judgement that follows.

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The *Righteous* shall rise also, They awake with vigour in their souls, and life in their eyes; with gayety in their looks, and transports in all their powers. Their new warm'd blood moves pleasantly in its ancient chanel; and the restored spirits dance in the renewed veins. They are glad to meet the old companion of their pleasures, and their miseries, rejoicing at its rescue from the infamous dishonours of corruption, and that 'tis ready to pass with them into the promised and long expected Glories.

These are the *First-fruits*, and the full *Crop* is near, and their joy is beyond the joy of *Harvest*; and we must leave the degree to be imagin'd, that cannot be express'd.

And thus the universal World both of the *wicked* and the *righteous* shall appear on the Solemn Summons.

The *Earth*, and *Air*, and *Sea*, and *Death*, and *Hell* shall give up their Dead, *Rev.* 20. 13. And so *Adam* and the *Patriarchs*, and all the *Ancient Sages*, with their *Sons*, and *Nephews* to the latest *Posterity*, shall stand up together before the *Judgement Seat*: for all are subjects of the same general Empire, and all are accountable for their *Actions* to the same *Sovereign Judge*: And He is the *Man whom God hath ordain'd to judge the world in Righteousness*. And this is the next

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thing in the Text to be consider'd, viz.

III. The person appointed, *The Man whom he hath ordain'd*: And this is the *Man Christ Jesus*, even the *Man*, who being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God, Phil. 2. 6. The same is He who is ordain'd of God to be the Judge of the quick and the dead, Act. 10. 42.

And now under this Head I shall shew how fit he is, as *man*, for this great and solemn office, in these two particulars.

1. He is fit to be the General Judge, as *Man*, because he descended to the meanness of our condition. 'Tis but just that *He*, who laid by his ancient Glory, and cloath'd himself in the Livery of guilt and shame, should re-assume that native Majesty and splendour in the face of universal mankind: That *He*, who made an humble stoop from the Throne to the Manger, from the Government of the World, to the life of a mean subject; should (at last) be illustriously advanc'd as much above the heights of humane grandeurs, as then he was below them.

'Tis fit that That *Holy and Divine Person*, who was buffeted and affronted, condemned and crucified by an abusive and injurious world, should righteously judge his Judges. That *Herod* may see that he persecuted not the Infant King of a little Province, but the Sovereign of Angels and

and men: And that *Pontius Pilate* and the *Jews* may be convinc'd that *He* whom they called *King in scorn*, is really a greater Emperour than *Cæsar*: And that *those* who were scandal'd at the *Cross*, and averse to the belief of an humble Saviour, may see the shame and confutation of their Infidelity, and their Folly; in the exaltation of the *Holy Jesus* above all the possibilities of worldly glory. Upon this account 'tis reasonable and becoming that the *Man Christ Jesus* should be the Judge. And it is so upon another, viz.

2. Because *He* contracted an alliance with our Natures, and experimentally knows and felt the Infirmities of our state. If the Supreme naked Deity should judge us immediately, we should be confounded and astonished at the Majesty of his presence, & his greatness would make us afraid. For who can bear that dazzling Glory? who can stand before a Throne surrounded with incomprehensible Light and Flame? This Glory is therefore allay'd by the interposal of humane nature; and this Light wears a veil upon it to encourage our approaches. Yea, 'tis our Brother, and our Friend that loved us, and dyed for us, who is the man ordain'd to be our Judge. He hath the same compassion, as when he wept over an obstinate City, and the same love, as when he bled and dyed for a rebellious World. He knows the strength of our temptations, and the weakness of our natures, and



will make abatements for them. So that the faithful may heartfully appear before his Throne, confessing their sins, and relying upon his Love. He that loved us, and was like us, is to take our Accounts. 'Tis our Redeemer is to be our Judge.

Thus may *believing Penitents* encourage themselves before him, and hold up their heads in that Day of terrors, as much reviv'd by the apprehension of his humanity and meekness; as the *wicked* will be dejected by the knowledge of his greatness and power.

And for this cause also, 'tis congruous and fit that the *Man Christ Jesus* should be Judge, when *mankind* is at the Bar.

I Come now to the IV. General to be consider'd — — — *He will judge the World in Righteousness* — — — viz. (1.) By a Rule: Not by unaccountable *humour*, or arbitrary *Will*; Not by hidden *Decrees*, or secret scrowls of *Predestination*. But by those *plain* and *open Records* that are in our Houses, and our Hands; that are Preached in *Publique* places, and declar'd in a language we understand. *The Books shall be opened*, Rev. 20. 12. and the Books the Rules of Righteousness, are the *Law* and the *Gospel*. The one strictly requires *perfect* obedience, the other accepts of *sincere*.

Now while our actions are tried by the *Law*, and measured by its *Righteousness*, our straightest Lines  
are

are crooked and uneven, and our greatest services are very scant and defective. The best are like the dust in the Ballance, and the rest are lighter than Vanity. For as Magnifying Glasses betray roughness, and a ragged surface in the best polish'd Marble; So this Glass of the Law discovers wrinkles and deformity in the fairest and most even vertue. And while mens lives and actions are compared with *this Rule*, all mankind is distrest, and a cloud hangs upon the brow of the most religious and most innocent. The Law concludes all men under sin, and sin under wrath: So that by this all the world is cast; and were happiness to be had upon no other terms, *strait* would be the *Gate indeed*, and *so narrow* the way, that none would find it. And while no other Book than this is opened, all the Generations of men fall prostrate before the *Throne*, condemn'd by the Law, and by themselves. Nothing is to be heard but an universal groan, and the suppliant cry of *Mercy, Mercy Lord!*

When loe! the *other Book* is opened, and out of it is read *Grace and Peace*, and multiplied *Pardons* to all the followers of the *Lamb*, who have believ'd in the Crucified *Jesus*, and testified that Faith by their Repentance, and sincere obedience: But *shame and darkness*, and new *confusions*; *Death, Horrour*, and everlasting *De-*  
*struction.*



*struction* from the presence of God and of his Christ, to all the stubborn rejecters of His Grace, who would not have him to Rule over them, nor accept of His offer'd Salvation. These are the Declarations of this Book, and *these* the measures of *that Righteousness* whereby we are to be judg'd: As the Judge himself hath told us, *John* 12. 48. *The words that he spake, the same shall Judge us in the last day.* And God will judge the secrets of men, saith St. Paul, according to my Gospel, *Rom.* 2. So that believing Penitents that are not perfect according to the Law of Works, may plead their sincerity, their Faith, Repentance, and new obedience, which is their perfection according to the Law of Pardon: And this will be accepted by the Judge with a gracious Air, and the sweet reviving voice of, *Well done ye good and faithful Servants.* He invites them to Him with the voice of pity and endearment, and ravisheth their souls with the pleasant sound of *Come ye blessed of my Father,* *Matth.* 25. 34. O the Ecstasies that are in that Sentence! O the killing harmony of that voice! Can a Finite spirit bear such excess? The pleasures of Eternity crouded into a moment: Did unfaln Angels ever know such another? or can there be more transport in ten thousand Hallelujahs? Certainly, the boundless imagination it self cannot form an Idea of that rapture, nor the Tongue of a Cherub express it. The

The summ is, The World shall be judg'd in *Righteousness*, viz. according to a *Rule*, and not by *meer power and will*: A *Rule*! not the *strict* and *severe* one of the *Law*, but the *sweet* and *gracious* one of the *Gospel*; whose *Righteousness* is *Faith*, and *sincere obedience*, which in the Great Day shall be accepted, and gloriously rewarded.

2. God will judge the World in *Righteousness*, viz. with *impartial equity*. To evidence this, let us consider the Judge in the three great qualifications of his *WISDOM*, *JUSTICE*, and *POWER*.

1. He is *Wise*, and cannot be abused by *Witnesses*, nor mistaken in *Law*; cannot be imposed on by false allegations, nor cozened by fair pretensions: He intimately understands the *Fact*, and the *Cause*, and cannot be deceived by malice of enemies, nor subtilty of excuses.

2. He is *Just*, *Νεκ δίκαιος*. A pure Mind, without *interest*, or *affection*. He cannot be aw'd by *greatness*, nor sway'd by *partiality*, and *fondness*. All mankind are equally distant from Him, and all stand upon a Level before Him. He that begs in Rags, and weeps in the Corners of the Streets, shall be heard as soon as the proud Gallant that lives in *Luxury*, and *Pomp*. He that tugg'd at the Oar, as soon as the Commander.



mander of Legions: And the poor fellow that follow'd the Plough, shall have as much right done him, as the mighty that sat upon the Throne.

3. He is *powerful*. *All power is in his hands, both in Heaven and on Earth*, Mat. 28. 18. So that he can execute his Sentence without resistance or possibility of rescue. There is no getting out of *His* reach, who holds the World in the hollow of his Hand. There is no opposing of his power, except we had an *Arm like God*, and could *Thunder like Him*. There is no quitting His Dominions, for his Rule, and His Presence are universal. The frozen North, and the farthest South; the Desert and the Ocean, are all within the bounds of His Empire, and His Influence. Yea, could we climb up into *Heaven*, that is *His*; descend we to the Centre, He is *there*; or if even as far as *Hell*, His power reacheth *thither* also, Psal. 139. 8.

In summ, The Judge cannot be *deceiv'd*, *corrupted*, or *over-powered*, and therefore on this account likewise He will *judge* the World in *Righteousness*.

**H**AVING thus spoken to the main parts of the Text, I descend to enforce all, by some *Practical improvement*.

IF

If then there be an appointed Day for so universal and righteous a Judgement, by so great and just a Judge, Let us consider,

(1.) How passionately, and differently mankind will be concern'd at that time. Of this something hath been said before, but I shall now discourse the matter a little further, and endeavour to give you some description of the *Terrours* of the *wicked*, and the *Raptures* of the *Just* at that solemnity: Though all that can be said will be very short of the Passions of that Day.

And (1.) How will the *careless* and *ungodly* world be *appall'd* and *astonish'd* at that unlook'd for Summons! How will the dark Gentiles, that never heard of such a Day; and the hardened Infidels that heard, but did not believe; and the dissolute spirit that heard, and believ'd but did not consider, how will they tremble and be confounded at the dread preparations of that Day!

Methinks I see the *pale looks*, and the *shivering motions*, the *gazing eye* and *listening ear*, the *distracted face* and *trembling hand* of the most proud and daring sinner. The *Drunkard* lets fall his Cup, and the *busy worldling* stands at gaze, the *loud companions* are hush'd into silence, and the *merry Droll* into a careful look. The *Atheist* hides his head, and the *sleepy Sot* starts up into anxious wonder.

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And



And after this first amazement, See how the trembling-multitude run distracted up and down, Some into corners to cover, others into companies to consult : Every man asks his Neighbour, what is to be done ? and he again repeats the question to every one that is next unto him : The Son runs to his amazed *Father*, who needs the advice his dear child seeks ; and the *Wife* clasps about her astonish'd *Husband*, that is as helpless as his frightened Consort. The *Publican* begs counsel of the *Pharisee*, and *he*, poor soul, is as much at a loss as the Reprobate.

They all Court the Mountains to cover them, *Rev. 6. 16.* and shuffle into Caverns to hide from the presence of the Judge. But alas ! they quickly see the vanity of those naked retreats, and find themselves as much expos'd in the closest Vaults, as they would be in the body of the Sun. Mountains are but Cobwebb coverings, and Rocks and Earth but a Cypress veil. Hills, Caves, and all are His, whom the frightened Fugitives would avoid, and *will not, cannot* conceal His enemies from His eye, that strikes through the Earth as through a Globe of Crystal. What shall they do then ; whither shall they go ? they cannot *bear* His presence, and they cannot *avoid* it : the Light *kills*, and the darkness will not *hide*. For the darkness is no darkness to this Judge ;  
The

*The darknefs and the day to Him are both alike, Psal.*

139. 12.

Thus will the wicked be confounded by the coming of the great and terrible Day, and most of all those that liv'd under the plain and frequent warnings of it. Had they never heard of this solemn time, they would have been *astonish'd* but not so much *affrighted*; It would have been their *wonder*, but not *so much* their *misery*. Had they not been told of this great appearance, and this Judge, they might have look'd on *that Majesty* without those sad degrees of dread, and such mortal shiverings, and hoped for great abatements in consideration of their fatal ignorance: But alas, they were told of this Day *earnestly*, and *often*. The God of all the World, and this Judge of all, acquainted them with this solemnity while 'twas future; And *these* Preachers that were most infallible, and most urgent, prest the *Truth* of these things upon their Faith and affections with all evidence and importunity, suableness of address and accommodation to their Reason and their Interest; with all the motives of hope and fear, and all the alliciencies and incentives that use to move reasonable nature. They *heard*, but did not *heed*, they *heeded a little* but *forgot* the next moment; they *assented*, but *slept*, they were *awakened*, but sunk again into a *careless slumber*; they



said they *believ'd*, but were not *concern'd*; *convinc'd* a little, but not *perswaded*; *Perswaded*, but not *resolv'd*; *Resolv'd*, and presently *let out* of mind what they had concluded.

And now when the sight of the Judgement Day shall thorowly awaken them to consider those invitations and warnings they had to prepare for it, what inward anguish will they feel at the thoughts of their sottishness and neglects? And methinks I hear the sinner thus inveighing against himself:

*Brutish Soul!* Where was thy *reason*? where was thy *Self-love*? where were thy *reflections*? where was thy *Providence*? couldst thou not look beyond the grates of flesh, or didst thou *see*, and wouldst betray me into this danger and this misery? wert thou diverted by *greater matters*? or hadst thou any thing of *more necessity*, or *concernment* to engage thy thoughts? was the sordid flesh a better friend than *that triumphant Jesus*? or the world an enjoyment *like* those rewards he will now dispense? were thy pleasures comparable to the joyes of the happy expectants of this *Time*? or thy little policies of equal moment with the affairs of this day? O how wild and absurd are these questions now! and why were they not alwayes such in thy esteem? Yea, why didst thou determine on the *unreasonable* side? what can the fondling flesh,  
and

and eht world do for thee? what relish now in those pleasures that are gone out in stench and shame? What profit in those designs whose objects are vanish'd with thy hopes? O how shall I answer this Judge? what shall I say to the black indictment that lies against me? why did I abuse his love, and reject his addresses? disregard his promises, and slight his threatnings? throw off his easie yoke, as an intolerable burthen, and choose darkness, death and misery before light, and life, and glory? what can I say to my Judge? what to my self?

Cover me shame and blushing; yea let death hide me, and everlasting darkness cast its covering upon me; But death will not befriend one that hath so sad a reason to seek it; and darkness flies away from *yond* glorious presence. O the day that I put *far* from me! and the danger that I would not consider! The *wrath* I have been *treasuring up*! and the evils that I fear'd, but would not endeavour to avoid! These are come upon me; Mercy is at an end; and pardon is no more; excuses are in vain, and Prayers insignificant; The Judge is just and inexorable, not mov'd by fond pity, nor weak affections; He will shew *no more* favour to those who so long have slighted it; Nor will He have mercy upon them that would have none upon themselves.

Such,



Such reflections of anguish and despair as *these*, we may suppose the sight of the Great Day will occasion in the wicked, and be the beginnings to them of a sad and intolerable Eternity.

On the other side, (2.) The *Transports* of the faithful will be unspeakable on that day; when they shall exchange the doleful tone of *How long! how long, O Lord!* for the pleasant voice, *He is come, He is come.* See now how the nimble spirits play in the smiling eyes, that languish'd and droop'd before; And all the lovers of the *Holy Jesus* awaken into chearfulness and vigour. Joy warms the cold and liveless blood, and sends it about with a pleasant thrill through all the channels of its motion; and the enkindled spirit is ready to melt the gross mass that detains it from the adorable object of its love.

O my soul! saith the transported admirer, How reasonable was thy Faith; and how unjust were thy Fears? How small were the troubles of thy night, to the pleasures of *this day*? and how injurious were thy complaints to so glorious an expectation? O blessed tears that end in such triumphs! O pleasant sorrow that ends in rapture! Was it such comfort that our Lord promised to those that mourn? was *this* the time I did so coldly expect, and so indifferently regard? Is *this* the Saviour I loved so little? and was *this* that Lord I was so careless to obey? Is *this* He whom

whom the flesh and world tempted me so often to deny; and whose interest could do so little with me? *Stupid soul!* How unworthy art thou of this sight of Glory? and how more unworthy of the favour of this glorious and triumphant Jesus? O the grace that pardons such great defects; and thus rewards such mean services! O the pleasure of Faith when it comes to be in sight, and the transports of hope that is within the reach of enjoyment!

*Such*, and incomprehensibly greater, will be the Ecstasies of the faithful in the day when the Judge shall appear.

Let us all then (II.) make it our main care and business to *prepare for this time*. We are probationers here for another state, and the Day of Judgement is the great *Time of Trial* for it. As we are found then, our condition will be for ever; And according as our actions have been, the Sentence will pass, either to everlasting Joyes, or endless Woe: What remains then, but that we look on this as our great and most necessary work; That we have the future Judgement *always in our eye and thoughts*; That we study the *Laws whereby we are to be judged*; That we frequently judge our selves before; and that we square our actions by the directions and example of the Judge. And if we thus prepare, That Day which will be so dreadful to the wicked, will be the



the most joyful one to *us* that we ever saw, and the beginning of an everlasting Day of Joy, that hath no night of sorrow to succeed it. For at the conclusion of the Judgement we shall pass with the Judge to those Regions of Bliss and Triumph, where we are to dwell with him to eternal Ages, singing *Hallelujahs* to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; To whom are due from us, and all creatures, all Glory, Honour, Praise and Adoration, henceforth and for ever. *Amen.*

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S E R M O N IX.  
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NECESSITY  
OF AN  
Unfeigned Repentance.

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SERMON IX.

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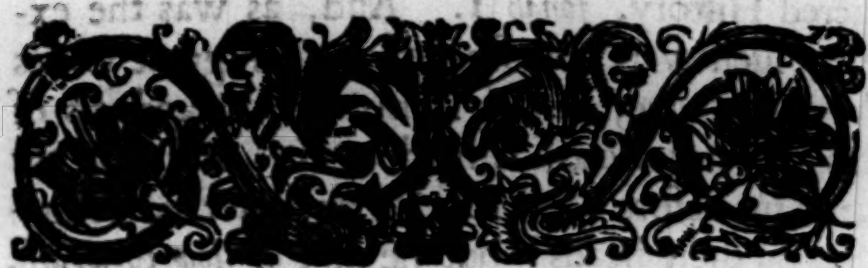
NECESSITY

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Unfeigned Repentance.

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# SERMON IX.

JONAH III. 5.

*So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a Fast, and put on Sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them.*

**N**ineveh, the ancient and famous City of Assyria, was founded by Nimrod, the mighty Hunter, and supposed first Monarch of the Earth; it had its name from Ninus, who compleated it, and was the third of that Empire. Where its particular place was, is not, at this day, certainly known; but this is certain, it was a great City, of three days journey, saith the



Sacred History, *Jonah* 1. And, as was the extent, such were the sins of it; all great Cities abound in vice, but (it seems) the wickedness of this was notorious, it made a cry, and that cry came up before God to call for deserved vengeance on their heads! but he that *is slow to wrath, and doth not willingly afflict the children of men*, resolves to warn before he strikes, and therefore sends *Jonah*, a Prophet of *Israel*, to foretel their approaching Ruine; He (considering the ungratefulness of the Message, and doubting what Entertainment he was like to have from a proud, and (as he might think) an obdurate City) diverts another way, and flees toward *Tarshish*; but the judgement of God overtook him, and plunged him into the Deep, where a Fish prepared, swallowed the Prophet, who having been three days in that Belly of Hell was by Miracle discharg'd upon the Shoar: and then the former Commission being renewed, he was not disobedient to the Heavenly voice, but went to *Nineveh*, cryed against it, and the Event was beyond all expectation, and extremely contrary to his own; for,

[The people of *Nineveh* believed God, and proclaimed a Fast, and put on Sack-cloth from the greatest of them to the least of them.]

Very

Very different was this Success from what other Messengers of God, Patriarchs and Prophets, and holy men of ancient, and later times, have had: *Noah* was a Preacher of Righteousness, and preached many years, while the Ark was in preparing, but they were disobedient in the days of *Noah*, and went on in their sins, till the Flood came, and swept away that world of the ungodly. The Prophets were earnest, and importunate, they cryed aloud, spared not, and God by them stretched out his hand all day long, and yet they were a disobedient and a gain-saying people, and gave them reason to complain, *Who hath believed our report, or to whom hath the Arm of the Lord been revealed?* The Holy Jesus himself, who was greater than *Jonah*, than any of the Prophets, than all; the Brightness of his Fathers Glory, and the express Image of his person, who did, as never man did, spake, as never man spake, even he came unto his own, and they received him not! they many of them believed: not his words, nor would they abide his Counsel, but gave him occasion to lament their hardness with tears of compassion, when he drew near the City, he beheld, and wept over it, saying, *If thou hadst known, even thou in this thy day, the things that belong to thy peace!* and then grief and tenderness breaks off the sentence., they would not know



know the things belonging to their peace, though the Prince of Peace was the Preacher of them: and therefore elsewhere he passionately expostulated with them upon the score of the same perverseness,

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the Prophets, and stonest them that were sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thee, as an Hen gathereth her Chickens under her Wings, and ye would not? The Son of God himself could not prevail upon a City, to which he made his frequent and earnest addresses: all he could do by the Methods of his Graces was to bewail their obstinacy, resolved impenitency, and unbelief: But Jonah succeeds on one, as wicked, and much greater, in the very first attempt he makes on it, v. 4. And Jonah began to enter into the City a days journey, and he cried, and said, yet forty days and Nineveh shall be destroyed: and the very next words are those of my Text,

[So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a Fast, and put on Sack-cloth, from the greatest of them, to the least of them, &c.]

In discoursing of this wonderful change, and conversion of the Ninevites, I shall,

(1.) Consider their sins: and,  
 (2.) Their Reformation, in the two main parts of it; Their Faith, [They believed God.]  
 Their

Their Repentance, exprest by [*Fasting, prayer, and turning from evil ways.*] And,

(3.) The universality of both, [*From the greatest of them to the least of them.*] And,

As I go, shall humbly compare their Circumstances with our own, and consider what duties are suggested to us by that comparison. I begin,

(1.) With their Sins; those were great, and the cry of them was loud, *Their wickedness is come up before me, Chap. 1. 2.* What their sins were in particular we are not told, but from the circumstances, and the severity of the judgement threatened, we may conclude they were very grievous; St. Paul tell us, *that at the times of Ignorance God winked [overlooked],* He over-looks, in comparison, he made abatements, and had respect to their frailties; He considers our Frame, our Impotency, and Temptations, and is not so severe in judging, and punishing men under those circumstances of disadvantage: According to the same Scheme of Speech, our Saviour speaks, *If I had not done the works that no man ever did, they had had no sin:* (John 15.) theirs had not been so great, not such in comparison. But now, notwithstanding the allowances the divine goodness makes for a state of Ignorance, and consequent Infirmary, the sins of these *Nations* were such as called for the severest judgements,



ments, even desolation [Destruction] – *Nineveh shall be destroyed.*

What this destruction was in particular, whether Fire from Heaven, such as destroyed *Sodom* and *Gomorrha*; or an Inundation of waters, such as had over-whelmed divers Cities and Countreys; whether an Earth-quake, such as swallowed *Corah* and his company; a sudden surprize of Foreign Enemies, such as that of the Barbarous Nations among the *Romans*; or of the *Europeans* on the *Americans*; or else any unexpected violent commotion among themselves, by Massacre, or Rebellion; whether to be extraordinary and miraculous, or in a plain and visible course; which of these it was, whether any of them in particular, we are not told, only destruction is threatned: Things were come to a sad issue with them, their sins were full, and ripe for vengeance.

Let us now, in the Name and Fear of God, humbly compare this with our own case.

Our sins also are very great, great as theirs in their Nature, and Quality, in their circumstances and aggravations much greater and more heinous: Blasphemy, Profane Swearing, Perjury, Luxury, Uncleanneſs, Drunkenneſs, Disobedience, Murder, Treason, Violence, Oppression, all the deadly sins, whatever is contrary to sound Religion,

gion, and true Doctrine, Reign, Triumph, brave the Sun, are fashionable, almost creditable! Fear and Shame, all the Restraints are gone; men make a mock of sin, glory in it, are ashamed of nothing: But Virtue, Sobriety, Religion; Religion, matter of the best, highest, truest honour, despis'd, buffoon'd, exposed as ridiculous!

Atheism, the greater, the less, formerly hid its head, *the Fool of old said only in his heart, there is no God*: but now it appears openly, and boldly claims the reputation of wit, the only wit, and good sense; men like not to retain God in their knowledge, but dispute his Being, Attributes, Providence, and you are beholding to them, if they do not bluntly tell you, There is no such thing, or do not say (at least) with those in the *Psalmist, Tush, God seeth not, he careth not, is there knowledge in the most high?* Such we are, and thus do, after Miracles of Mercies, and of Judgements; after mighty Calamities, and equal Deliverances; frequent warnings, and Importunate Calls to Repentance!

And now, we have not indeed any immediate extraordinary Prophet, particularly sent to thunder against us, but we have the warning of *Moses* and all the Prophets, of Christ, his Apostles, and Ministers of all sorts; besides all which,

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the Providence of God, and the Circumstances of our affairs, and all things about us call loudly, that we should prepare our selves to meet the Lord coming to reckon with us; but, alas! how shall we do this? Strength is weakness, Policy is Folly, and Infatuation; when he is angry, his power is not to be resisted. *Hast thou an Arm like God, or canst thou Thunder like him? Job. His presence is not to be avoided. Whither shall I flee from thy Spirit? Ps.* What shall we do then? must we sit down in despondency, in despair of Mercy? is there no Remedy, no way? Blessed be God, there is one; the same that was taken by the poor *Ninevites*, who did not summon their armed Forces, nor put their wits upon the Rack for Stratagem, and Counsel, for publick Safety, (means that may be used, and ought, in their place.) No, they lookt on the Evil threatned, as from the Lord, with whom there was no contending, against whom there was no contriving, and applyed themselves to appease the offended Majesty; and they took the right course to do it; for [*They Believed God, &c.*] This was,

(2.) Their Reformation; the second thing I was to speak of: in which I consider,

First, their Faith, [*They believed God,*] his Being, Attributes, Providence, Love of Virtue, Hatred of Vice; and that the way to appease him when

when he was angry was by the use of Prayer, Fasting, and turning from evil ways. These they understood without a Prophet, and believed before the preaching of *Jonah*. God hath conveyed some main knowledge of himself to all his world, and hath not any where left himself without a Witness, his Laws are written upon the hearts of men, and all of those we call most Heathen. *Rom. 2. What is to be known of God, is manifest.* Chapter the first of the same Epistle, *all the World is his*, the Souls of men especially so, of his Family, his Off-spring (as it were) Bone of his Bone, Flesh of his Flesh, and he provides for his own, they are worse than Infidels that do not. He takes care for Oxen, for Sparrows, for Lillies; much more then for the Souls of his Reasonable Creatures; *the very hairs of our Heads are numbred*, certainly then the Souls of men are every one considered, every one, some way or other, provided for. The Summ is, God hath dispersed some Light, some glimmerings (at least) of Light and Truth among universal Mankind; and these men of *Nineveh* had their portion, and by that were prepared for more; that alone was not sufficient, and therefore God sends them a Prophet, not an Angel to destroy (like those sent to *Sodom*); not a common ordinary Messenger from among themselves;

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their case required more; but an extraordinary person, one from far: when men are prepared for Repentance, they shall have the proper means, God will not be wanting to his Creatures, when the ordinary means will not do, they shall have such as are extraordinary and uncommon; when the Native Light, and convictions are not sufficient, they shall have an external Preacher, such was Philip to the *Æthiopian Eunuch*, *Acts* 8. And an Angel sent to *Cornelius* to direct him to an Apostle, *Acts* 10. Thus was *Jonah* sent to the *Ninevites*, and doubtless many other good Heathens were so assisted. He went, though after a Repulse of the divine commission, and they were more ready to hear, than he to preach; in that they both believed the Messenger, and the Terrible Message that he brought. We alas! believe what we like, what is grateful, and agreeable to us: and our Faith is much in our affections; but they believe what was dreadful, and amazing, the truth was most opposite to their corrupt Inclinations, and carnal Interest, and this their Belief is interpreted as faith in God. To believe his Messengers coming in his name, and with his Truth, is Believing him, as our Saviour saith, *He that receiveth you, receiveth me; and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me: and again, He that despiseth you, despiseth*

*spiseth me; he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me.* The *Ninevites* did not so by *Jonah* or his Message; consciousness of their own guilt, and their Natural Apprehensions of divine justice, made them apt to receive Impressions of dread; and doubtless they had ill Abodings in their minds before, by which they were prepared for such a Message, and a Prophet, one coming from another Countrey to appear with so much Resolution, and to speak with so much Authority, and assurance, affected them more than if they had been used to such preachers of Errours; nor are we to suppose, that he only repeated to them these dreadful words, *Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be destroyed.* No, these (more likely) were but the Summ, the Text, the Burden of his Sermon, which probably he amplified with all those Considerations, that were apt to move, and awaken: and possibly the Mariners that were with him in the Ship, and threw him over-board, upon the Lot; that saw the Fish swallow him, and the Tempest quieted upon it, might have come into *Nineveh* before him, diverted from their intended voyage by the Storm, meeting him again, after they had seen him plunged into the Ocean, might certify the people of the Miracle, and they thereby assured, that he was an extraordinary person, and



and was come to them in an Extraordinary, and Divine Errand; but whether this were so, or not, whether they credited the Prophet on these Motives, or any other, is not certain; but this is, *They believed upon the preaching of Jonah.* And now,

As God daily preacheth unto us by his various Messengers, so he doth by his Providence, by which we are sometimes brought into great straits, even to the Brink of Ruine; and when it is thus with us, when we are in a state of perplexities under present Evil, and Fears of greater, let us not abuse our selves with false confidences, put far from us the evil day, and cry Peace, Peace, when there is no Peace: let us not impute our Troubles, and disorders to accident, and common causes; but consider, that the Hand of God is in them, who is then about to reckon with us for our sins, and a voice sounding from thence, Repent, Repent, for your Iniquities will be your Ruine. Let us not be deaf, and stupid, as the careless old world were, till the Flood came, and swept them away; or as those Mockers, the Apostle speaks of, who scoffingly said, *where is the promise* (to them it was threatning) *of his coming?* when he was at the door; but let us humbly be affected, as these poor creatures were, who  
believed

believed upon the preaching of *Jonah*.

And what was this Belief of theirs? was it cold, indifferent, unconcerned assent only? no, it was a Faith, powerful and active, that wrought a mighty change, and produced the blessed Fruits of Repentance, and Reformation; their Faith had been dead, and unsignifying, if it had not wrought, and wrought this way; if they had past a Complement on the Prophet, that they believed him, and gone on in the same course as before; if they had believed God, and continued in their provocations of him, their Faith had been an aggravation, and might justly have heightned, and hastened their ruine; it had then been a great argument of their Impudence, and Obduration: but theirs was not a Fanatical, Pharisical Faith, without works; but a Faith Operative, and Fruitful, and the Effect of it was Repentance; and the expressions of that Repentance, Fasting and Prayer, and turning from evil ways.

1. Fasting. This is a Rite of Humiliation and Repentance, in which we acknowledge our unworthiness, and our vileness, that we merit not common mercies, but deserve the greatest punishments; and this anciently, and in all times was also exprest by Sack-cloth, and vile cloathing, whereby these *Ninevites* likewise set  
out



out their wretchedness, and ill deservings. God Almighty hath so made us, that we are apt, and cannot help it, to represent our inward Affections by outward Expressions: and here is the ground in Nature, and in Reason of Sacrifices, and all the Rites of External Worship, and particularly of this, by which the men of *Nineveh* declared their abasement before God; and we have need of some eminent signal way to humble our selves before him, in acknowledgement of our greater, and more aggravated crimes; we have sometimes publick Fasts, and days of publick Humiliation; But are they such as God hath chosen? do we in them afflict our souls with penitence, and Godly sorrow? do we as much as impose any penance upon our external persons? alas! we generally do not so much as the *Pharisees*, and Hypocritical *Jews* did, who hung down their heads, covered them with Ashes, put on Sack-cloth, and sad looks, and abstained from all things that were grateful, and agreeable to the Body, but we will not give our selves the trouble as much as to appear, or look like it; our Fasts are not only not the thing, but not the resemblance, or meer name, in effect a Mockery; other kind of Fasting and Humiliation is expected, and required from us; and the greatest, the deepest is not low enough, nor great enough

enough to signifie the sence, and sorrow, that is due to so much guilt! The *Ninevites* declared theirs solemnly, The King descended from his Throne, and put on Sack-cloth, sate in ashes, and proclaimed general Abstinence, to Man, and Beast; and we see, that the whole people conformed to the penitent Example, and put on Sack-cloth from the greatest of them to the least of them: This was one expression of their Repentance, and it was accompanied with another, which also was very proper, and significant, (*viz.*)

(2.) Prayer. Earnest, affectionate Prayer, exprest by *crying mightily unto God*, v. 8. This also is a Duty generally acknowledg'd through the world, in all the ages, and places of it, part of the Law written on the Heart, a Branch of the Religion of Mankind: These *Heathens* knew the necessity, and virtue of it; we have no Reason to think they learnt it from this Prophet, whose Message was destruction; and by the consequent story, we see, he thought of nothing less; they knew, that their sins were against God, as all are; *against thee, and thee only have I sinned.* He was offended, and he threatned; he was to be appeased, or they were undone; and prayer is the way, that all the world is taught to seek pardon, and favour by; this they took, *they*

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cryed



*cry'd unto God*, not unto Saints and Angels, unto God, One, the true God; That there is but one Supreme Deity hath ever been the Belief of Mankind, even of the Heathen world; the various gods, we read of, are but the divers representations of the one all-perfect Being, or of his different Attributes, and Manifestations in the world; or they are of lower signification, and mean only Angels, or nobler Souls departed, in which sense the Scripture saith, *There are Gods many*. So that the *Romanists* cannot this way justify themselves from the Imputation of Idolatry, by alledging, that they worship one, and the true God, as the ultimate object of their Adorations; for even the Heathens, The *Ninevites* believed God, and they cry'd mightily unto God: indeed the Mariners in the Storm *cry'd every one to his God*, viz. his Tutelar Angel, and *Genius*, such many of the Heathens had; and (it seems) these were Heathen Mariners: But these here direct their Devotions to the one Supreme immediately; so they were required, and so by the consequence, we find, they did; for *God saw their works*, and this among the rest: and he repented him of the Evil he had threatned, and sent it not: this was the blessed answer of their prayers! And now,

If they, or any other people had ever Reason to cry mightily unto God, we have ; Let us humbly do this, he is ready to bestow pardon, and deliverance, but he will be sought unto. Let us do it in Faith and fervour, we have great Advantages, and Encouragement, which the *Ninevites* had not ; we are taught how to pray, and in whose Name.

We have a Mediator at Gods right Hand, that ever lives to make Intercession for us ; we have through him free admission to the Throne of Grace, with boldness, and many promises, that we shall be heard, and receive the Blessing, if we ask in Faith, and in the Sons Name : Let us then pray fervently, humbly, and incessantly, for our Prince, and Nation, for our selves, and posterity ; that God would pity, and pardon, divert his Judgements, and deliver us from all our Enemies, and all our Fears, Establish our Religion and Government, and all our Interests in those. And,

*O thou that stillest the raging of the Sea, and the Madneß of the people, be merciful to us, do thou save us, or we perish ; The Seas swell, and rage horribly, and the Deep is ready to swallow us up quick, do thou, O Lord, put forth thy Hand, and stay us, or we sink, and perish in the great waters, we sink into the depth of the Abyße, and there is no help, Be thou our help*



*er and deliverer, for vain is the help of Man!*

Thus prayer, earnest, affectionate prayer is necessary; not that God can be moved thereby, but thereby we are prepared for his Mercies, and he is always ready to give, when we are fit to receive. But

Beside this, the men of *Nineveh* did somewhat else, and it was that which made the rest significant.

(3.) *They turned from their evil ways.* This was the main thing, and without it, Fasting and prayer had been to little purpose, yea they had been Abominations as the Sacrifices, Oblations, Fasts and Services of the *Jews* were, because they did not loose the Bands of wickedness, or let the oppressed go free; They did not *do Justice*, and *love Mercy*, and *walk humbly with their God*, which he principally required from them, but these *Ninevites* did; *They humbled themselves, and turned from their evil ways, and from the violence that was in their hands.* It seems, some of their principal sins were Cruelty and Injustice, and therefore their Reformation is particularly noted: they knew where the Root of the Distemper grew, which was the cause of approaching Judgements, and therefore here they apply the Remedy, in renouncing those sins they were so notoriously guilty of.

The Light and Law of Nature told them,  
how

how displeasing sin was to the Almighty, and that there was no atonement, but by Repentance; no Repentance, but in Turning, and they did this: They thought it not enough to cry out upon their sins, *to roar like Bears, and mourn like Doves*: as the Expression is in the Prophet: This ('tis like) they did, but stopt not here, they went on to what was more to purpose, *They turned from their evil ways.* Repentance is turning, *Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye dye?*

Let this practice of theirs be a pattern to us, let us seriously consider the common crying National sins, and how far we are guilty of those provocations, and resolve in the Strength of God to cease from them, to destroy them our selves, and to endeavour every one in his place, to suppress them in others: thus far each man is his Brothers keeper; and Charity, and the Common Interest require this Endeavour from us, by reproof, by advice, by the exercise of our power: Let us consider, what are our particular sins, the sins of our Education, of our Complexion, of our Condition, and apply the Grace of God, and our chief watchfulness, and diligence against them, that we may strike at the root, and destroy the strong holds; let us do the work thoroughly, and effectually.

This our present safety, ours, our Kings, ~~our~~ God



Government, our Religion, our posterity require from us; for if we continue to do wickedly, we may expect to be destroyed, both *we and our King*. This, all the considerations of the next state demand, loudly call for, all manner of Reasons from both the worlds urge and enforce this: Let us not be still stupid, and deaf to such calls, but hear, and fear, and do no more so wickedly. Let us put a stop to the course of our sins, and then we may expect that a stop will be put to our Troubles, and the Judgements threatned and feared, will be turned from us.

The Summ of all is, to urge us to be as wise in our Generation, as those poor Heathens were in theirs, who Believed, Fasted, Prayed, Reformed; and we may consider further,

(3.) The Universality of these [*From the greatest of them, to the least of them.*]

They were all affected, they all did something, and so much as was accepted. This is a wonderful Instance of Conversion, somewhat like it is that of St. Peters 3000 in one Sermon; *The King humbled himself, and the people Fasted, and put on Sack-cloth.* The Greatest is not too great to humble himself before the God of Heaven, nor the least too little to be consider'd by him, all Flesh had corrupted it self, all were become abominable in their doings, and therefore all were concern'd

concern'd to be greatly affected, and deeply humbled, from the greatest to the least [*From the Greatest.*] There the Humiliation begun, The King descended from his Throne, and put on Sack-cloth, laid by his Majesty, and Glory, debased himself in the dust, and put on vile array, significations of Sorrow and Repentance; from the great, 'tis like, their enormous sins begun, thence they had their examples, thence their encouragement. The great draw their Trains after them, Natural Pride and Ambition, make all desirous to imitate them, their Example is largely diffusive and infectious, and makes sins fashionable: their sins quickly over-spread, and debauch a Nation, and therefore, 'twas fit, that Repentance should begin here, where, probably, many of their sins did; that the great should cure by their good example those they had hurt by their bad, and theirs being against more Mercy, and more Expectation are the greatest, and most aggravating: and therefore there was Reason, and need, that they should be most penitent, and first so: and accordingly here it Commenc'd.

Reformation is like to be general and effectual, when the Great begin it in themselves: it doth not stop there, but passeth through the middle-degrees, to the least of men, the meanest, and least considerable, those also add to the common  
heap.



heap of provocations, and those have therefore reason to be humbled also; and when Gods hand is lifted up, and his Judgements are near, he requires, and expects that all, and every one, from him that sits on the Throne, to him that grinds in the Mill, should repent, and turn to him; the sins of the meanest contribute to the publick guilt, and their Repentance helps forward to publick deliverance.

Let us duly consider this circumstance of the Repentance of the men of *Nineveh*: and,

O that God in his Mercy to us and them would open the eyes of the Great among us to see this their duty, and the things that belong to their Peace before they are hidden from their Eyes: as their Guilt is often greatest, so the publick consequent Judgements (many times) fall heaviest upon them. Two late dreadful Judgements we have been under, Fire and Pestilence: These fell chiefly upon the middle and meaner sort. The Judgements we have now reason to fear threaten all, but chiefly the Great.

In the Name of God let us all pray that a deep Spirit of Humiliation may be upon them, that they may reflect on the greatest of their sins in their Nature, and the Mischief they have done by their Influence; that they may strive to go before all the rest in Repentance, and shew the Inferiour

Inferiour souls the way to Safety and Happiness; that they may lay aside all Vanity, Luxury, and Intemperance, Rioting and Drunkenness, Chambering and Wantonness, the *Dalilahs*, the dearest sins, those of Pride and Pleasure, the sins by which the Nation hath been made drunk, poysoned, debauched and depraved, that they may mourn for these great crying Iniquities, and in the strength of Divine grace resolve to turn from them: This would be the happiest sight that ever *England* saw, and the most hopeful. Oh that our eyes were blest with it. And

Let not us of the middle and inferiour sort content our selves to desire their Reformation and amendment, but resolve also on our own: 'Tis generally very grateful to us to hear the faults of the Great ript up, of our Governours especially: It will concern us more to affect our hearts duly with those we are guilty of our selves. And in this we the Ministers of Religion, the Guides of the people (at least, who ought to be so) should lead the way; our unworthiness also hath been great, and our provocations have been many, we have not returned unto the Lord according to his Benefits, or made a right use of his Mercies, we have not been so strict in our Lives, or so diligent in our great and most weighty Employment, so much concern'd for

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the good of the Church or Interests of mens Souls as we ought to have been; many have been Loyerers, some Rioters, scarce any have imploy'd proportionable Zeal and circumspect diligence: Our faults are published and aggravated to the height (I hope beyond it) by our Enemies of all sorts, and we may expect still a greater load of Criminations and Reproaches. Let us consider that this evil is from the Lord for our sins: He said to the Lying Spirits *Go*; and *David* reflected that he might have bid *Shimei* curse him. Let us look at his hand and humble our selves before him, and not spend our Breath in Invectives against the Instruments of our Troubles and Fears, but apply the proper Remedy to the Root of our Distemper, which we know is to bring forth Fruit meet for Repentance. And let not the people spend their, all their Heat, and Zeal against the sins of their Governours and their Misdeeds; in these they are apt to exceed, and run beyond bounds, and multiply their own sins in so doing: But let them lay their hands on their hearts, and say, We have all sinned and done wickedly, we have been all as sheep going astray, but we will return to the great Shepherd and Bishop of our souls: Let them make themselves deeply sensible, not only of the gross carnal Evils, but of the Spiritual Iniquities, malice,

lice, bitter zeal, contempt of Rulers, and betters, Schism, Separation, waywardness, and the like; and not excuse and extenuate their sins; charge others, and lessen their own by Pharisaical comparisons; but let all sorts and degrees of men charge themselves with their own guilt, and deeply abase themselves before the Almighty in the sense of it; and when it is thus, when penitential acknowledgements and humiliations are universal, then a people is prepared for the Mercy of deliverance, and the evils threatned shall not come. And

In order to this we should not look and stay till the rest begin, but every one should endeavour to be the first; and if we do take this course and proceed in it, whatever others do, whatever they suffer, we shall be safe, if not for this world, yet for the next certainly (which is better) and probably for both. And

Now I shall endeavour to enforce this great, this most seasonable, this most necessary duty, by several considerations taken from the circumstances of the Repentance of the men of Nineveh,

1. They were Heathens, such as the Prophet speaks, had not the knowledge of Gods Law, (*viz.*) in the fulness and expressness of it; and yet they Repented. But we are Christians,

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whose



whose are the Law and the Prophets, to whom Christ is come, Eternal Life is made manifest, and the Everlasting Gospel is revealed: And shall we continue our Impenitency and Obduration? Are there Flowers in the Wilderness and none in the Garden? Do the wild Beasts of the Forest hear his voice, and shall not the Sheep of his own Fold obey him? This will be an aggravation of our sins, if we impenitently continue in them; those rude Heathens did not so.

2. They Repented upon Preaching: we do not read of any fiery Tryals they had been under, of any dreadful Judgements that had been upon them; we hear not of any prodigies in the Heavens, or any portents in the Earth, Blazing Stars, or Fiery Swords, or Earth-quakes, or dreadful Apparitions, or other terrible sights to predict their approaching Ruine; such as have been fore-runners of Destruction to many Nations. No, we hear only of preaching, *Jonah* Preaches, and they Repent. But now God hath pleased to vouchsafe unto us great plenty, as to the Declarations of his word and will by preaching; 'tis as common as Gold in *Solomon's* Time, as the Stones in the street, and we trample on it, and make it as vile. Preaching is customary, grown a thing of Form, hath lost its force upon us, we believe not the Report of it, we refuse  
to

to hear, or hear with carelesness and unconcernment, with no design, or with a wrong one to entertain our Curiosity, or to gratifie our Fancies with the same Affection that they see and hear Plays; otherwise generally we neither heed nor mind what we hear: The most powerful preaching hath little or no Authority or Effect with us or upon us. Besides which,

We have been exercised with great and grievous Judgements; when his word would not prevail, God was pleased to take the Rod into his hand, we were harrass'd with Twenty years Civil war, that drew our Blood, and wasted our strength, and consumed our Treasure, and filled us with horreur and desolation, that brought in Oppression, Tyranny, and sad Confusions; from the aforesaid War was the overthrow of the best of Governments, the Murder of the best of Kings, Suppression of Laws, and Destruction of the best Patriot and Subjects, and an universal Slavery, Misery and Disorder. And after our deliverance from those evils by a wheel of Providence, we continuing still in our sins, and growing the worse for our mercies, he sent a raging Pestilence among us; The destroying Angel poured forth his Viols of wrath, and poyson'd the publick Air of our chief City, and destroyed Thousands and Ten Thousands in  
our



our Streets, and such a Mortal Contagion as had not been in all the days of our Fore-fathers. And that Judgement was followed on the heels by another as dreadful, and by a devouring Fire we were made as *Sodom*, and like unto *Gomorrha*: The Strength, the Glory, the Beauty of our Land laid in Ashes, and made an heap of Stones. Notwithstanding which and many other Providences, Mercies and Judgements, we have sinned yet more and more, as if we dared the most High, and resolv'd to provoke him to destroy us utterly.

Thus we have done, and if this is the ground of our present Troubles and Fears, and if we persist in our hardness, and do not at last return by Repentance, What can we expect but the utmost extremities of his vengeance? The poor *Ninevites* repented upon preaching, and 'twill be a mighty aggravation of our sins if we continue impenitent, not only under the most awakening Preachers, but the most dreadful Judgements.

3. The people of *Nineveh* repented upon the preaching of a single Prophet, they had but one *Jonah*, not so much Testimony as useth to be expected in common busiueſs, *in the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every thing be confirmed*; and yet they did not call for more evidence: There was

a *Jonah* within (their own Conscience) that preach't the same Doctrine for the main with the other without, and they repented upon the Preaching, external Preaching of a single *Jonah*. But now among us, great hath been the number of the Preachers, Patriarchs and Prophets, the Son of God himself, and a whole Army of Apostles, Ministers, Confessors, Martyrs in former, in latter, in present times, a whole Cloud of Witnesses, with a Firmament thick of Stars and Glories, Lights of all sorts and sizes. And now did those poor Heathens hear the voice of a little Brook, and shall not we the noise of many Waters? Were they enlightened by a single Planet, and we not so by numerous Constellations? This also will be another and great aggravation, if we still persist and go on harden'd in our sins.

4. The *Ninevites* repented when they might have doubted, who is this *Jonah*? he is a stranger to our Countrey, to our Laws, to our Religion, and shall he lead us? this *Jonah* is a sinner, and God doth not use to send his mind and messages by such. He saith he is a Prophet, but how shall we know it, where are his Miracles? where are his Credentials from Heaven to justify our Belief of him? Thus they might have question'd and disputed the matter, but they took the better course,



course, and repented on the Preaching of *Jonah*. They knew that though *Jonah* was a stranger, yet one that was not so, the Preacher within, taught the same Doctrine, that they might expect Gods Judgements on them for their sins; that though *Jonah* were a sinner, yet they might learn their duty from such; that though he should not be a Prophet, yet there needed no Prophecy or Extraordinary Messenger or Messenger to make them acknowledge the Divine Justice, and their own Guilt: So that instead of cavilling and disputing, they repented and turned from their evil ways. But now God hath given us a sure word of Prophecy, and mighty and undoubted Miracles have confirm'd the Ministry of *Moses* and the Prophets, and the Gospel is established by the greatest that ever were, and we have highest Reason to Believe for the works sake, and the Divine Testimony that was given to the Holy *Jesus* and Apostles, by the uncontrollable Miracles which they wrought especially: we are assur'd by that greatest, of our Saviours Resurrection from the Dead, by which he is declared the Son of God with power, all his Doctrines and all his Actions, and the whole Scope of his designs do infinitely confirm it unto us: And yet we doubt and dispute, and cavil when we should Repent. This also greatly heightens our sins, and will our condemnation,

tion, if we do not seasonably, speedily take another course.

5. The *Ninevites* repented upon the Preaching of a Temporal Judgement, *forty days and Nineveh shall be destroyed.* It was the destruction of their City, no express mention of the Ruine of their persons and posterities, much less of the damnation of their Souls; and yet upon this lesser Threatning they Repented. But now besides the many Temporal evils our sins threaten us with, we have denounc'd against us the loss of our Souls to eternal ages. *The wicked shall be turned into Hell, and all the Nations that forget God, Ps. 9. 17.* And terrible is that Sentence pass'd on the impenitent, *Mat. 25. 41. Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting Fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels: Every word speaks terrour, depart and Depart cursed into Fire, into everlasting Fire, and Fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels, in their company and under their condemnation and Torment.* Such threatnings one would think should effectually restrain men from their sins, and bring them to Repentance; and woe to us if those or Gods other Methods do not effect it.

6. The people of *Nineveh* Repented upon uncertainty of Success; They were not sure that their Repentance would be accepted, yea they

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had



had great reason to fear it would not; for the threatening in the Form seem'd to be absolute. But they knew that there was certain Ruine in the way in which they were going, and some probability, possibility at least, that the Divine goodness might interpose for them upon their Repentance, and they acted wisely, and took the safer course, they Repented and Repented upon the faint Encouragement of a peradventure, *who knows but the Lord may repent and turn, v. 9.* But now God hath pleased to give us the fullest, the greatest assurance of Pardon and Favour upon Repentance: for this we have his repeated word and his Oath, and the Blood of his Son and the Testimony of his Spirit: This is the Covenant he hath made with us, and his Son came into the world to give us the assurance, and his Spirit hath always confirmed it, that by these *immutable things by which it is impossible for God to lye*, we might have strong confidence that our Repentance will be accepted and rewarded. And 'twill be a very great Instance and aggravation of our hardness, if notwithstanding we go on impenitently in our accustomed sins.

7. The men of Nineveh Repented, and they did it speedily, *When the Prophet began to enter into the City a days journey*, it follows immediately, *So the people of Nineveh believed God: They did not stand*

stand to consult and deliberate about the Business, they did not say to Jonah as Felix did to St. Paul, *We will hear thee some other time of this matter;* no, They heard and Repented presently. But we are apt to procrastinate and delay, and put the work off from one day to another, from youth to manhood, from thence to old age; from the time of Health to Sickness, from thence to a Death-bed, and still cry to-morrow and hereafter. But if we think to do it at all, let us take the next time, Delays here are most dangerous, and the work will still grow the more difficult: We are call'd by present Providences to instant Repentance, if we delay yet longer it may be too late, immediate Reformation is expected and required from us, or immediate Judgements are to befall us. And

The same Encouragement have we for the work of speedy Repentance as these Ninevites had; for this is most certain, that if we Repent of the Evil we have done, God will also Repent of the Evil he hath said. Both which gracious Acts of Penance on our part, and Pardon on Gods, that they may be done, God of his infinite Mercy grant through the Merits and Mediation of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord,

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To



To whom with the Holy Ghost be ascribed  
by Angels and men, by all things in Heaven  
and Earth, as is most due, all possible Praise and  
Power, Might and Majesty, Dominion and  
Adoration to Eternal Ages. Amen.

And the work of God is not confined to one day or one  
hour, from youth to manhood, from manhood to  
old age; from the time of Health to Sickness,  
from Sickness to a Death-bed, and still cry to  
him for help. But if we think to  
do it at all, let us take the next time. De-  
lays here are most dangerous, and the work will  
still grow the more difficult: We are call'd by  
present Providence to instant Repentance, if  
we delay yet longer it may be too late, imme-  
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rits and Mediation of his Son Jesus Christ our  
Lord.

To

B. B. 2

S E R M O N X.

The Various

M E T H O D S

O F

Satan's Policy

DETECTED.



SEERMON X

The Visions

METHODS

OF

Satan's Policy

DETECTED.



## SERMON X.

2 COR. II. II.

*For we are not ignorant of his Devices.*

**H**e great and known Enemy of Mankind at tempts our ruine by a double method, that of confest opposition, and flattering insinuation; and what he cannot compass by main strength, he endeavours by Stratagem, and by Artifice. In which latter, he hath always been most unhappily successful, prevailing more by Policies, than by Power. Satan is most dangerous in the



the livery of Religion, and the appearing Angel of light hath done more execution, than the known Prince of Darkness.

Indeed in the early times of Christianity, it's enemy and ours thought to have over-born and crusht it by open ways of violence; and therefore vigorously assaulted this new and naked Religion, with all the force that Wit and Interest, Power and Malice combined, could draw together; and with all that rage, that Hellish zeal could inspire, flew upon the naked Infant, that had no captivating arts to recommend, no visible aids to assist it: But Innocence was too powerful for Arms, and Truth and Vertue for assault; and the Designer perceiving that this persecuted Christianity did but brighten and grow more conspicuous by the Flames he kindled against it: That the injured Innocents prevail'd more on the World by their Patience, than their enemies did on them by their Cruelties: That this hated, this maligned Religion stood like a Rock in the Sea, while the frightful Waves and foaming Billows did but dash and break themselves against it. I say, perceiving how little success he had in his assaults, he betakes him to his arts and his devices. He pretends to that which he designs against: and gets into Religion that he might overthrow it: And this design he hath been.

been ever since carrying on in the world, viz. to destroy Religion by it self. And if ever Christianity be exploded, 'tis like to be by a Spirit that highly pretends unto it : So that the roaring of the Lyon is not so formidable as the wily subtilties of the Serpent : And the Deceiver in the close Pharisee is more dangerous than Satan in the Publican and open Sinner.

Now the way to defeat frauds and wiles, is to understand them, and the Designer is disappointed as soon as his practices are discovered ; we therefore owe this care to the interest of our souls, to endeavour to be acquainted with the arts of our enemy ; and we shall be secure from the danger of their influence, when *We are not ignorant of his Devices.*

Now the chief Devices of the Grand Designer are levell'd against the Glory of God, the Peace of the Church, our Faith and a good life. All which in some of their main branches, I shall endeavour faithfully to discover ; and though I foresee my discourse will light on things which are very sacred with some who will be angry with every one that is not fond of their darling devices, yet I shall not keep the Devils Counsel, because I know they are not so much theirs, as his. And the more men are taken with the pretence, in the greater danger are they of the mischief.

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To



To begin then with the first Head proposed, Satan deviseth against the Glory of God, and that in these instances, *viz.* against his Goodness, his Grace, his Spirit, and his Worship.

(1.) Satan designs against the Glory of Gods goodness. The goodness of God is his nature, and the fountain of his actions, *Quia si Deus non esset bonus, non esset Deus*, saith the Philosopher, and *God is love*, saith the Apostle. And the most suitable apprehension we can form of God, is to look on him as an Infinite, Eternal, and Almighty Love, as that benign fountain that is continually overflowing, and that glorious Sun that is always shedding abroad its beams and brightness. Indeed the dry essence of God we cannot know, 'tis hid from our sight, and our approaches in dazzling glory, and light inaccessible: But his nature, that is, the Principle of his actions, is his goodness; and his attributes are but the several modes and variegations of Almighty Love, from which they differ but as the colours of the Rainbow do from the light of the Sun. This then is the dearest and most God-like Attribute, and the Divine glory is most concern'd in the honour of his goodness; and against this Satan hath in these latter days especially been most subtilly and unhappily designing.

For

For perceiving that the notion of a God was so deeply prest upon the Souls of men, that there was no erasing, no plucking it thence: He endeavours to corrupt and undermine what he could not otherwise destroy. And if he cannot obtain of the world to say with the Fool, *There is no God*, he'll attempt to perswade them to believe, that God is like him, or themselves; and so is worse than none: which he doth by instilling notions into the minds of men, vastly prejudicial to the honour of his goodnes, and representing him as eruel, merciless, and tyrannical, as one that hath made Myriads of excellent creatures, to make them miserable for ever, and who delights in triumphing over the wretched and calamitous whom meer unaccountable Will hath made so. As one that hath involv'd the greatest part of his best Creation in black and dismal fates, before they sin'd or had a being, that do what they can, will dragg them into the Regions of endless woe and pain. Thus representing the God of Love, under the character of the most detestable Cruelty and Injustice, and making him who is a Lover of men, an Almighty Cannibal, and an Idol more black than the God of the barbarous Americans.



Which sowre and injurious apprehensions of God had never enter'd upon the minds of men, by profest and open ways of opposing that goodness which shines with so clear a beam into our Souls, and is writ upon every leaf of the sacred volume, and external nature; and therefore the cunning agent hath insinuated them by a Device; pretending himself a mighty Zealot for the glory of God's absolute will, power, and prerogative over his Creatures, which he hath strain'd and forc'd beyond all the bounds of Right, Just, and Good. And by such representations he knows he doth no real honour to these Attributes, but reflects a certain disparagement upon the divine goodness. For a Will that is arbitrary, and not govern'd by goodness and wisdom, is meer unaccountable humour and womanish impotence, and not becoming him who acts by the Council of his own will according to the Apostle; yea and the Heathen Poet,  
*Διὸς δ' ἐπιταγῇ πάντα.* And that power and prerogative, that is a perfection of the divine nature, is always in conjunction with the milder and sweeter attributes, he cannot lye, he cannot destroy him, saith the Apostle: He cannot act contrarily to the rules of his infinitely perfect essence. And indeed to act inconsistently with the eternal laws of Right and Good, is not only cruelty and injustice,

stice, but impotency, and weakness. So that this mighty noise of the glory of Gods absolute power and prerogative, in contriving and resolving the ruine of his creatures, is no exaltation of any perfection in God; but a sad and particular execution upon his goodness, and consequently upon Religion, the foundation of which is laid in Love to God, which is fatally overthrown by such sower and surly notions of him, as represent him as the hater of his creatures. *And when such apprehensions (as one hath well observ'd) meet with stout and resolute tempers, they do but canker them against such a Being, so that first they wish he were not, and then easily persuade themselves he is not. Or, if such opinions of God light on the more timorous and passive spirits, they do but fright them into some poor sneaking, forc'd and feminine devotions, which are devoid of all heart and life. And thus the success of the first device against the glory of the divine goodness, is either Atheism, or a Superstition that is near it.*

But (2.) Satan deviseth against the glory of God, by disparaging his Grace; which he doth by detracting from the fulness, under pretence of exalting the freeness of it. The Enemy of Mankind is envious at that Grace the Divine goodness affords us, and denies him, and because

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he cannot confine the bounty of Heaven, or hinder the beams from descending from above, he endeavour to raise clouds below that shall intercept them, and deprive us of their influence, which he doth by suggesting narrow and diminishing apprehensions of the grace of God, and representing it as an arbitrary, contracted desultory thing, bestowed only here and there by humourous measures, and directed by no rule but that of meer unaccountable will, by which abusive representation, the glory of the divine Grace, which consists in its universal diffusion, is clouded and eclipsed, and the minds of men hindered from apprehending what they enjoy, and from enjoying what without such an abuse they could not but apprehend.

This is the design and the mischievous issue which to cover and to propagate, the cunning Machinator pretends the exaltation of the freeness of that grace which he designs to dishonour and defeat. He raiseth a mighty cry of Free Grace, and intitles the Libellings of divine goodness by the specious name of *Vindiciae gratiae*. He fills mens heads and mouths with Grace, Grace: O the freeness of Gods grace! Nothing will be admitted but what comes in the Livery of grace; men are pleased with the very word, and tickled with that deat and agreeable sound:

all

all discourses are insipid that are not full of free grace; and he will not be allow'd to know any thing of it, that is not rapt up into the ecstasie of admiring it.

Who would think now that such a Spirit as this, that so highly pretends to exalt Grace, should really disparage it, and undermine it? Who would think that the enemy of Gods Grace, blew in this humour upon the world, and kindled this mighty zeal that seems so gloriously to illustrate and recommend it? And yet we may see reason to believe so, when we shall consider that this Free Grace, that is so magnificently talkt of, is infinitely unworthy God, and prejudicial to his Glory, both in the notion of *Free*, and in the notion of *Grace*. For a thus admired, thus celebrated freeness, is but an humoursome doating on a party, which self-admirers are pleas'd to call the *Elect*, that is, those of their own fashion and likeness. They first fanse themselves the favourites and special darlings of Heaven, not from any reason they have to think so from the goodness of their lives, but the strength of their imaginations, which furnish them with strong and proud presumptions; and then they admire (and well they may) the freeness of that grace which chooseth them to be the darlings, and peculiar people, with as little reason, as they,



they can conceit themselves to be so. And thus the freeness they commend in God, is that we call childish and unreasonable fondness in our selves; which is infinitely unbecoming him, who is a lover of Righteousness, and no respecter of persons: who acts by the eternal Laws of Right and Good, and not by the feminine measures of impotent humour and indulgence, and the freeness of whose Grace consists not in loving or favouring us, without reason, but for reasons drawn from the benignity and perfection of his own nature, which communicates without external motive or constraint, without bounds or possibility of impediment. And thus we see how a corrupt and abusive notion of the freedom of Gods grace, hath been insinuated by this device to the prejudice of his Glory. And as free grace has been misrepresented in the notion of *Free*, so also hath it been corruptly taught in the notion of *Grace*; which some have represented as a violence the divine power offers unto our wills; at least, superinducing a foreign quality upon us, to which we contribute nothing, which makes us *Μοίρα ἀγαθῆς*, as the Heathen expresses it, Good and happy by a certain fate. So that good men are but a better sort of Engines. By which notion of grace God is supposed to contradict the laws himself hath established in the Universe,

verse, which have provided that every thing act  
consonantly to the rules of their own natures.  
Besides which, such an irresistible impulse as this,  
defeats the doctrine of Rewards and Punish-  
ments. For who is rewarded for actions that  
are perfectly anothers, or who is punish'd for  
what he could not help? And if grace be such a  
force as makes men good irresistibly, and this  
Grace bestow'd only on one here, and another  
there, meerly as arbitrary Will shall dispose it;  
the greatest part of men (for ought I see) will  
have fair apology for their sins, at least for their  
neglects, since they wanted that which was ne-  
cessary to make them better, and God alone could  
have given them.

————— Ἐγὼ δ' οὐκ ἄριστος ἦμι.

Ἀλλὰ Ζεὺς καὶ Μοῖσα —————

was the Apology of the Heathen; and might be  
all mens else upon this supposal. And to this  
I add, that such a notion of Gods grace, lays a  
foundation for sloth and remission of all endea-  
vour. For whoever believes that the grace of God  
where it comes is like a mighty current that bears  
down all before it, irresistibly forceth our wills  
to a compliance, and makes such sudden and  
miraculous changes upon our natures: I say  
whoever believes this, and thinks also that this  
grace is necessary to make him good and happy,

D d d.

and



and that nothing he can do can obtain it, or draw it near him; what can we expect, but that such a man should neglect all care and diligence in order to the making himself better, in expectation of this necessary irresistible Grace, without which his endeavours are at the best impertinent? and who is so ridiculous to digg for the wind to fill his Sails, or to endeavour to set to Sea without it?

We see then how the fulness and glory of the divine grace have been undermined by plausible and dangerous conceits that have crept into the world under the notion of free grace, dishonourable to God, and injurious to the interest of mens Souls. And this is the second device I proposed to detect.

Thirdly then, another design Satan manageth against Gods glory, is to disparage and vilifie his Spirit, which he doth by ascribing to it the foolish, and sometimes wicked impulses, the fond and extravagant conceits of the sons of imagination. For as of old when he perceived he could not overcome the belief and acknowledgement of a Deity: He multiplied Gods, and Deified things of the meanest and vilest rank and nature; even stocks and stones, vices and diseases: in like manner perceiving now that he cannot hinder the influence of the Spirit

Spirit of God from being acknowledg'd in the world: He crys up every folly and hot imagination, for the work of the Spirit: He entitles it to boyling passion, under the name of zeal, and to the diseases of mens fancies, melancholy, and phrensie under the name of the Spirits motions. Thus when kindled melancholly hath inflamed the imagination with hot and scalding conceits, and the fired Fancy gets into the Revelations, opens the Seals, pours out the Viols, and fantastically interprets the Fates of Kingdoms; when 'tis mounted on the Wings of the Wind, flys into the Clouds, and flutters there in Mystical nonsense, when it flows into the tongue in an extravagant ramble, and abuseth the name and word of God, mingling it with canring, unintelligible babble; I say, when the diseased and the disturbed Fancy thus variously displays it self, Satan makes men believe they are acted by the Spirit, and that those wild agitations of sick imagination are divine motions.

And when this fire is descended from the fancy to the affections, and these, being extremely moved by those vain and proud conceits, cause tremblings and foamings, convulsions and ecstasies in the body (all which are but natural diseases, if not worse, and just such as were those odd ~~ecstasies~~ ~~ecstasies~~ motions of the Devils Priests, when

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they,



they came foaming from his Altars. ) These I say the same wicked Designer hath taught these wild Phantasticks blasphemously to ascribe to the blessed, and adorable Spirit. And when, their fancies being full of turgid notions and their bodies in an ecstasie, they dream of strange sights, voices, and wonderful discoveries, which are nothing but the unquiet agitations of their disorder'd brains. These also Satan perswades them to be divine Revelations, and effects of the Spirit of God shewing it self miraculously in them.

Briefly then and in summ : Every humour and Fantastick unaccountable motion hath by this device been represented as the work of that Spirit, to which they are most opposite. Thus when warm and brisk Sanguine presents a chearful Scene, and fills the imagination with pleasant dreams, these are taken for divine illapses, for the joys and incomes of the Holy Ghost. When heated Melancholly hath kindled the busie and active fancy ; the Enthusiast then talks of Illuminations, New Lights, Revelations, and many wonderful fine things, which are ascribed to the same Spirit. But when Flegm predominates, and quencheth the Fantastick Fire, rendering the mad man more dull, lumpish and unactive ;  
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then the Spirit is withdrawn, and the man under spiritual darkness and desertion. And when again choler is boiled up into rage and fury, against every thing that is not of the Fantastick cut and measure, this also is presumed to be an holy fervour kindled by that Spirit, whose real fruits are Gentleness and Love.

Thus then doth the Devil devise to disgrace the Spirit of God and its influence, by those numerous, vile, and vain pretensions, which he thinks a likely means to extirpate the belief of the agency of the Spirit, and to render it ridiculous.

But again (4.) Satan deviseth against Gods own glory by designing against his worship. Which he doth by endeavouring to destroy its reverence under pretence of Spirituality. God requires to be glorified in body, and in soul, which are his, and Satan sets the worship of one against the other, that he may destroy both. Thus when under the Law Religion required the Pomp and Solemnity of external Rites and Usages, the subtle designer drives it on in that method so far, that at last the Spirit of Religion was lost in the ceremony, and the life and substance in the circumstance. But when Christianity came into the world to abolish that ceremonial œconomy in order to the establishing a  
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more spiritual frame of Worship, then doth Satan turn with the Tyde, and puts on the semblance of a Zealot for Spirituality, which he prosecutes so far, till at last in the Gnosticks and other airy Hereticks, he had run Religion out into meer empty Fantastick Notionality. In like manner where in these latter ages the world hath been disabused, and hath detected the vanity of the formal outside Religion of Rome. There doth the designer fall in with the Current, sets up for a Reformer, and mightily contends for the Spirituality of Worship. He gets into the Pulpit, and there with hot and sweating zeal he crys up the purity, the purity of Religion, and never leaves canting on the subject till he hath fired mens tongues against every matter of decency and order, as formal and *Antichristian*. And when he is shut out of those high places, he creeps into corners, and inflames the Spirits of the zealous and the ignorant, against all harmless circumstances of Reverence and Decorum. And so far hath he prevailed in this device, as to drive those of warm affections, and weak heads, from all due external Reverence to God and things Sacred. For these well-meaning people being frighted by the terrible noise of Popery, Antichristianism, Superstition, (things they

they have learnt to hate, but not to understand) boggle, and fly off from every thing their furious Guides have marked with this abhorred Character. And thus a rude and slovenly kind of Religion hath made its way into the world, and such a sordid carelessness in matters of divine worship, that should a stranger come into the assemblies that are acted by this Spirit. He could not by their carriage imagine what they were a doing; and that they were about holy Offices, would perhaps be one of the last things he could conjecture. Thus bold and sawcy talk hath crept into mens prayers, under the pretence of holy familiarity with God, nauseous impertinent bawling, under the cover of praying by the Spirit, and all kind of irreverences in external demeanour, under the shelter of a pretended Spiritual worship.

And thus the design of Satan is successfully carried on in the world, which is, to subtilize Religion till he hath destroyed it. To make it invisible that he may make it nothing. And this is another way whereby he betrays those who are *Ignorant of his Devices*. And thus I have dispatcht the first General, viz. Satan's Devices against Gods glory.

From



From which I descend to the second, *viz.* Satans devices against the Peace of the Church, which, while it stands in its main and united body, is like a mighty mountain unconcern'd in the tumults in the air, while the blustering winds and tempests assault, but cannot prejudice or disorder it. And therefore the Designer endeavours to divide, what he cannot deal with in its knit and combined strength: He strives to crumble it into Sects and Atoms, that this mountain may become an heap of Sands, which he may blow up and down, and scatter with his winds, and so at last become a plain before him. For which Design he hath two main instruments and Devices, *viz.* (1.) Phariſaical Pride under the cover of Religious strictness: And (2.) Intemperate Heat, under the notion of Holy and Divine Zeal. These are the chief Engines for the dividing purposes.

(1.) Then he hatches, and fosters a Spirit of Pride and Sectarian Insolence, (a sure and fatal Divider) under the specious pretence of Religious strictness. For where he perceives he cannot succeed in his designs of debauching the world, and propagating open prophaneſs and Impiety: He shifts his shape, puts on the cloathing of light, and wraps himself in

a Cloak spun of strict and severe pretensions ; and in this habit puts himself among the proud and conceited Professors. These he and their own vanity gild and adorn , with all the glorious names and priviledges of the Gospel ; and when they have incircled their heads with their own Fantastick Rays , and are swoln in their imaginations , with a tympany of ridiculous greatness : They then proudly contemn all, but their darling selves, under the notion of the formal, the moral, and the wicked ; and scornfully pity the poor and carnal world ; that is, all that are not arrived to their conceited pitch and elevation : and now having thus dignified themselves, and debased others, they herd together, draw the Church into their little corners, and proudly withdraw from the Communion of others , who have less conceit , though more Christianity. They bid us stand off , lest we pollute them with our unhallowed approaches, and having made us as the Heathen and Publican, they cry, *Come out from among them.* The true Church, Soundness of Judgement, Purity of Doctrine , and of worship ( if we will believe them ) is confined to their Gange ; just as it was to the corners of *Africa* of old, when their friends the Gnosticks were there. Thus they swell and swagger in their fantastick imaginati-

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ons, till some other Sect as well conceited as themselves endeavour to take their Plumes from them, and to appropriate these glorious Prerogatives unto their own party; and then they bustle and contend, Here's the Church crys one, nay but 'tis here crys another, till a third gives the lye to them both, and then the scuffle grows warm of Pride against Hypocrisie, and the self-conceit of one Sect against the Pride of another, and all against sobriety and truth: and thus is the Church divided, the interest of Religion weakened, and the world prepared for Atheism.

But ( 2. ) Another instrument and Device, Satan useth to imbroil the Church, is Fantastick heat under the name and notion of divine zeal. Fire is a subtile and powerful Divider, and no fire like that which is supposed to come from the Altar, though it be but a passionate flame kindled in a fiery temper that is only tinctured with Religion. For every thing that is hot and vehement about Religious matters wears the name and Livery of Zeal; and Zeal when 'tis directed by good Principles, to the ends of sobriety and virtue, is a noble and generous temper; but when 'tis actuated by ignorance and evil principles, and hurried on by blind impulses, to the ends of rage and animosity, 'tis a dangerous

rous, and killing evil. And like a fire-brand in a Magazine of powder, which destroys without distinction, and blows up every thing that resists the fury of its motion. This then being fair in its pretence, and mischievous in its effects, Satan useth in his designs of dividing. He kindleth some little Religious warmths in eager and violent Constitutions, and blows the Coals till natural passion be concerned and fired: So that at last what was at first only a spark of Religion, becomes a mighty flame of Rage. Then breaks he out upon the Church with this holy Fire, destroys that Charity which is the bond of peace, and fills all with smoak and vapour, darkness and confusion. He Christens this *Jehu*-like fury, a Zeal for God, and declaims against every thing that is sober and temperate, as luke-warmness and indifference. He gets into the Populace (who have many grains of Rage for one of Judgement) and hurries the poor mistaken Bigot, together with the proud Pharisaical Dissenter, and the silly conceited Schismatick, into the same unavoidable ruine, to eternal ages.

*From which, &c.*





S E R M O N XI.  
THE  
A N T I Q U I T Y  
O F O U R  
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Stated and Cleared.



SERMON XI

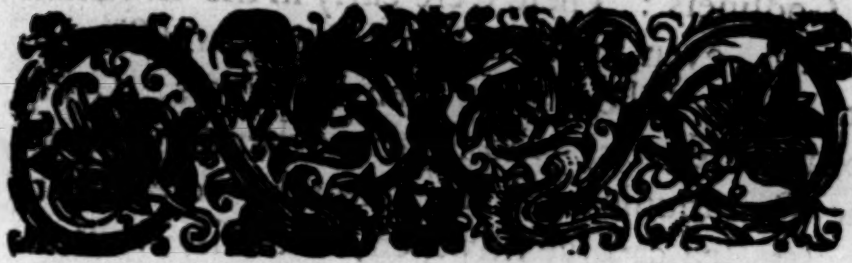
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Stated and Cleared.



# SERMON XI.

JUDE I. 3.

*Beloved when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common Salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you, that you should earnestly contend for the Faith which was once delivered to the Saints.*



Ur Saviour tells us in the Parable, that where the Husbandman had sown the good Seed, there the enemy scatter'd Tares, where God by his Spirit and Messengers hath planted Sacred and Divine truths, there Satan sets Errors, Heresies, and Doctrines not according  
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to Godliness : These were early in the Christian Church, even in the original Purity and Simplicity of it. There were then Deceivers, Lying Spirits, Seducers, who separated themselves from the Communion of the Church, crept into houses, led captive silly men, and silly women; privily brought in *dammable Heresies*, even to the *denying the Lord that bought them*; turned many from the faith to follow fables, dreams, and senseless imaginations. Such there were then, and St. Paul tells us that there must be Heresies, 1 Cor. 11. 19. The lusts and various corruptions of men, in conjunction with the permissions of God, make them unavoidable. Some of the first we read of in the Christian Church, were the Judaizing Christians, who taught the necessity of retaining the Mosaical law, the deniers of the Resurrection, and the vile Gnosticks who under pretence of more knowledge, and higher priviledges, abused Christian Liberty to all licentiousness, and vileness of living, making shipwrack both of Faith and Conscience. Against these, St. Peter, St. James, St. John, particularly write in their Epistles, and this of our Apostle St. Jude, is all directed against that Heresie. In opposition to which, writing of the Common Salvation, he saith, it was needful to write unto them (the true Catholicks) and exhort.

hort them, that they should earnestly contend for the Faith, which was once deliver'd to the Saints.

This was needful in his days, and 'tis certainly as necessary in ours, in which all the old Heresies are revived, with the addition of new, on which account the subject is too seasonable, and I chose it at this time, as a Preface to the discourses, I intend on all the main Principles of the Christian Religion, as I have already treated, in order, on all the Principal heads of the Natural,

In the words read, two main propositions are implied.

1. That there was a Faith anciently deliver'd to the Saints.

2. That all Christians are bound to contend, and earnestly, for that Faith which was deliver'd to those Saints.

I begin with the First. There was a Faith deliver'd to the Saints. Now amidst the great diversity, and contrariety of opinions, that at present are in the Christian Church, each entitling it self to the Faith that was originally deliver'd to the Saints, it may seem a matter of difficulty to determine which is the right, the true Faith: which difficulty doth not arise so much from the nature of the thing, as it doth from mens corrupt interests and affections, disputing about it. And therefore abstracting from these, I shall endeavour



deavour to set before you, the chief Characters of the true Faith, by which you may judge what that is, and where it is to be found.

And 1. The Faith we treat of, is an Ancient, Primitive Faith. *Quod verum id prius*: Truth was from the beginning. Divers of the Doctrines with which our Saviour hath enlightned every one that cometh into the world, were before his personal appearance in it. *Before Abraham was I am*, saith *He*; and *Abraham saw his day*, the discovery of his great truths and ways. He was the Author and Finisher of our Faith: In him it begun; and it was consummate in his personal teaching and instructions of his immediate Disciples and Apostles, who by the Spirit deliver'd to us what they had received from him. Natural Truths are more and more discover'd by time: For many go to and fro, and Science shall be encreased. But those divine verities are most perfect in their fountain and original. They contract impurities in their streams and remote derivations; and the way to discover the corruptions is to stand upon the old ways, and see how it was in the beginning.

By this Character of the Faith; that of the Roman Church is condemn'd. For all the Doctrines and usages of that Church, that are denyed

nyed and opposed by ours, are in comparison. Novelties and Innovations; and whatever Antiquity they pretend to, they were not primitive. Their Image-Worship, Invocation of Saints; Half-Communion, and Prayer in an unknown tongue, are directly, palpably contrary to the Holy Scriptures: Their pretended Infallibility, and Universality, their Indulgences, Purgatory, and Transubstantiation, with divers others of their Doctrines, and usages are by plain consequence condemn'd by those Sacred Writings, which are the repository of the ancient Faith and Practice; and both the one and the other were unknown to the first and purest times, those of the first three hundred, nay six hundred years: which assertions, I have in this place particularly and largely made good; and divers of our Learned Divines have in their writings fully proved it: Nor is there any one thing which we condemn in the *Roman* belief or practice, but what hath arose by the corruption of times, long since the beginning; and indeed in the the Church of *Rome*, there is an eternal fountain of Innovations, in the authority they assume, of declaring; that is in good earnest, in making new Articles of Faith. So that their people can never know when they have all; new things may still be obruded



as necessary and essential, without end.

On the other side, the Character of Antiquity condemns the Sects also. Among them there are some old Heresies received, but their principles and practices, as opposite to those of our Church of *England*, were not in the first, best times. *Presbytery*, *Independency*, *Anabaptism*, *Quakerism* may have been here, and there of old in the brains of some particular conceited men, but never were in any general practice any where; the eldest not two hundred years ago; and some have arose in our own time. Their ways they pretend to, be contain'd in the holy Scriptures; and if so, we would presently acknowledge them to be Primitive: But they are in the Scriptures, only as those are interpreted by their private Spirits; that is, not there, but in the fancies of the Innovators; and these being their guide, in interpreting, Lo! here also is a fountain of perpetual novellizing. And as long as the imaginations of men can frame novelties, we shall never be at the end of new Sects.

We have seen the rise of some in our late times of confusions, and if ever we should be so unhappy as to see such again (which God forbid) in all likelihood from the same Source; other new, yet unheard of, Sects and Heresies would arise, to the further dividing of the Church,

Chnurch, ad scandal of Religion. There is nothing so pregnant with Novelties as imagination, and the Sectarian private Spirit is no better nor worse than Fancy. I deny not, but these, all sorts of them, do retain some of the Primitive Doctrines, as the Roman Church also doth; but their opinions and ways that are opposite to the Church of England, are not such.

This our Church, without fondness or overweening, I may say, doth profess and teach the Ancient, Apostolical, Primitive Christianity, and hath admitted no new things that are contrary to it. It was reformed according to the Scriptures; the Scriptures, as they are interpreted by the first General Councils, and Fathers, those next the Apostles, who, we ought to believe, understood best what were their doctrines and ways.

This Church in its constitutions is therefore truly ancient, so in every main, every considerable thing; and truly Protestant, protesting both against Roman and Sectarian Innovations.

2. Another Character of the Faith delivered to the ancient Saints, is, that it was pure: 'Twas delivered to the Saints, and it made them such. The wisdom that is from above is first pure. It teacheth and produceth Purity, Holiness, and real Goodness, in Heart and Life. The  
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business of it is to conform us unto God, and to make us like him : And the Lord our God is holy.

And by this Character also is Popery condemn'd. For this teacheth some direct impieties and immoralities, and by the consequence of some other of its Doctrines, the necessity of Reformation of life, is quite taken away ; the Reins are laid on mens necks, and Gods Laws are made void by their traditions.

Of the first sort are their Idolatries, and Invocation of Saints and Angels, which God both in the Old Testament and the New, hath so earnestly declared against ; as the highest dishonour to his Majesty, and affront to his Glory ; and which he stigmatizeth as the greatest impurities ; and frequently calls Fornication and Whoredome ; they are spiritually so : Likewise their doctrines and practices of deposing and murdering of Princes, and absolving the people from their Allegiance, their dispensing with Perjuries, Rebellions, and other sorts of wickedness, are highest immoralities, and most Antichristian ; that is, most contrary to the Spirit, Genius, and designs of the holy Jesus, which were to redeem unto himself *a peculiar people, zealous of good works*. Besides which direct and point blank oppositions, to the Christian principles

ciples and Rules, they strike at the root and main design of Christianity, by those their doctrines that render repentance and change of life unnecessary.

For according to them, the favour of God and eternal Salvation may be had upon easier terms: Crossings, Pilgrimages, *Ave Maries*, Whippings, Fastings, with Confession and Absolution, will do the business. There is no need of cutting off right hands, of plucking out of right eyes, and mortifying the body, in our Saviours spiritual sence; that is, of subduing and rescinding all inordinate appetites and affections, (which are the great difficulties of Religion) the bodily exercises will suffice; we may be safe, and Sainted without obedience to those hard sayings. Or, if the other things should be omitted, 'tis but going to Purgatory at last, and if you have money to leave for Masses and Dirge's, you are secure of being pray'd out thence. So that here the greatest design of the Gospel, which is real, inward holiness, and purity, is destroyed: And without holiness 'tis here made possible to see God. And this is the worst thing that any thing that pretends to Religion can be guilty of.

On the other hand the Sects, whatever purity and spirituality they pretend, do many,  
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most of them, teach doctrines, and walk in ways that are contrary to the purity of heart and life, that becomes a Christian. The Gnosticks, who were some of the first Fanaticks in the Christian Church, pretended that they were the spiritual, the pure people, and that all things to them were pure, on which account they gave themselves up to all Immorality and filthiness: *Sensual*, saith the Apostle, *having not the Spirit*. They denyed there was any moral good and evils in the nature of things, and estimate of God. And this Heresie is received among some of our Sects, God they think and say, sees no sin in them his elect people. He loves not for the sake of holiness and vertue, but freely, that is, for no reason but meer unaccountable will; and if so, 'tis in vain to amend our lives, to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in order to our acceptance with him: Though we are the quite contrary in all manner of evil conversation, we may yet be his beloved, his chosen: This hath the malignity of the worst of Popery or Heathenism. And such a Principle is among some of the Sects: I accuse not all others that do not affirm so much as this, do in a manner make good works unnecessary: Faith, their airy Faith, that prescinds from moral goodness is all. All is believing, receiving, trusting, relying; which  
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are great duties, parts of Faith, but this, as justifying implys more, *viz.* an entire obedience to the Gospel. — Such a Faith as this is that which St. James writes so earnestly against, as dead, and unsignifying (of it self alone) to the purpose of Justification, and acceptance with God. Again the imputed Righteousness of Christ, is a great truth rightly understood, but by divers Sectaries 'tis abused to this false notion, that all Righteousness that Christ wrought, is formally and properly ours, as if we had done it: So that we may be holy and vertuous by his holiness, though we have none of our own, contrary to that of St. John, *Little Children, let no man deceive you, he that doth righteousness, is righteous, even as he is righteous. 1 Joh. 3. 7.* But these fancy they are righteous, without doing Righteousness: if they can lay hold on Christ, roll upon him, (as they phrase it) and firmly believe that he is theirs, they are then compleatly righteous, by the imputation of his, though they have none of their own: which *Solifidian*, *Antinomian* Notions, that are lately spread among the Sects, place Religion in the fancy, as the Popish Doctrines do in some external services; and as effectually as theirs, take away the necessity of real reformation, and true goodness. I might add a great deal more under this head, as their Doctrines of In-

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firmities,



firmities, by which they excuse themselves in their Spiritual sins, their decrying morality, as a dull, low, graceless thing, the immoral practices of Schism, Disobedience, &c. that they indulge and defend themselves in. These are impurities that are contrary to that Faith which was once deliver'd to the Saints.

But now the Church of England teacheth all the duties we owe to God, our Neighbour, and our selves, in the just latitude and extent of them. It hath no shifts or evasions of Repentance, and Reformation. It allows no hopes of Salvation but upon those terms. It teacheth no practice that is impious, or immoral, nor indulgeth any; whoever is an evil man in this Church, knows he is so, by his own Principles he is condemn'd; and hath no hopes of Salvation, but what are grounded on effectual Repentance, and Reformation.

3. *The Faith deliver'd to the Saints* is peaceable. Those Saints were so; Sheep, Lambs, Doves. Such was their Lord, the Prince of Peace, and his Religion, the wisdom from above pure and peaceable. By this Character also Popery is confuted, which tends to the destruction both of Ecclesiastical, and civil peace. The former, the peace of the Church, they pretend to have best provided for, by the Supremacy and Infallibility they have erected in theirs.

And

And by these all Controversies in Religion, are (they tell us) quickly ended. But the misery on't is, that that which should end the Controversies, is it self, one, and the greatest. They have an effectual Engine for Union, but they themselves are not agreed where it is; and they are incurably divided about this their ground of uniting. For some place the Supremacy and Infallibility in the Pope, some in the Council, some in both; and this hath not been only the opposition of petty Doctors and Disputers, but Church is against Church: The *French* and the *German* for one; and the *Spaniard* and the *Italian* for another: Yea Pope hath decreed against Pope in this matter; and Pope and General Council against Pope and General Council. Lo! here is the Catholick Union, the certain and infallible way of ending Controversies in Religion. A way they have, but they cannot find it: Yea, they are together by the ears about that Infallible way of ending all strife. And notwithstanding this rare receipt that is in their hands, the disease, the great differences and disputes of their several disorders, remains still uncured. And indeed that Church hath laid a foundation for everlasting differences and disagreements, by bringing numerary, speculative, and doubtful Tenents into their Creeds;



an Engine for endless divisions. There is no possible uniting, but upon the few, main, certain Articles contain'd in the Primitive Creeds. Additions to these are the chief grounds of the Divisions of Christendome. So that the *Roman Church* provides not for Ecclesiastical Peace, but destroys it by its disputable Articles of Faith; and further so, by its other intollerable terms of Communion, the various Idolatries and Superstitions it imposeth, by which they drive the best and most intelligent Christians from them: And so are themselves the Schismatics: They make the breaches in the Church they complain of. And for civil peace, 'tis clear in all Histories, that the Popes, and their Agents and Emissaries (especially the Jesuites) have been the great embroylers and Incendiaries of Christendome: The combustions and troubles of every nation in it, can sadly witness this. The fore-mention'd Doctrines of Deposing Kings, and absolving the people from their Allegiance, are principles of everlasting Rebellions, and disturbance.

But let us look on the other side. How is it with the Sects in respect of peaceableness? why, they may say unto strife, *Thou art our Mother*, and to Feuds and Animosities, *you have brought us into the world*. Unpeaceable of principles, and temper,

temper, breed and maintain them. They are broken from the Church, and divided each from other, and amongst themselves subdivided, minc't almost into Atoms. There is nothing but endless divisions, animosities, jarrings, disputes among them: *The ways of peace they have not known*, they will not know. They have causlessly separated from the Communion of the Church of England, and for the same reasons must have left the Fellowship of the Saints mention'd in the Text, and of all the Christians of the Primitive times, to whom both in doctrine and many practices, they are most unlike.

And upon the same principles, new Sects grow out of them, that divided first, and more evils spring from those others from time to time, to the worlds end. I deny not but that there are diverse misled abused persons of peaceable, and quiet Spirits, drawn in among them, and we are to pray, and to endeavour that such may be regain'd; and if the Government should think fit to abate some lesser things in consideration of such, to satisfy and recover them, it would be charity and kindness, that I know not who would dislike. But those that are of the right Sectarian stamp and temper, will never rest, or settle anywhere, nor be satisfied with any concessions. God Almighty may change their hearts and  
minds.



minds by his power, but nothing less can; and all that we can do is to pray to him for them: Nothing less than their whole wills, and an entire subjection to their fancies, will content them: and if those were granted, we could not be assured they would please them long; nothing useth to do so. *They are Clouds carried about with winds*, Jude v. 12. Let the wind be where it will to day, no one can say from what point it will blow to morrow. They are acted by a private Spirit that is as little certain: The opinions it suggests are numerous, and all accounted divine and sacred, (Gods truth, Gospel ways) they must not be parted with, or silenc'd; no, all Laws and Constitutions of Government must be thwarted, overthrown rather: Love and Peace and all must be sacrificed to the Idols; which being so, what quietness can there be from hence? what peace or temper among such principles? These perpetually annoy, and disturb the Church; and to know what they do in the State, let us consider *Germany, Scotland*, and 'tis to be hoped (though we have frail memories on this side) we shall not forget how peaceable the Sectaries have been in *England*, or not observe how quiet they are at this day. Remember I hope we shall for Caution; I urge no other remembrance. I wish they themselves did

did not remember them so well, as we find they do by many of the same actions and discourses: That Kings hold from the people; are only Trustees for them, and may be resisted and deposed, when they fail in that trust, are Politicks that do not much tend to civil peace, and we know whose Principles those were; and we have no great reason to think they have quitted them. I can give but brief hints of things that would afford matter enough to fill Volumes, as both Popish and Sectarian disloyalty, Rebellions and disturbances would do. But into these mens secrets let not our Souls come.

The Church that we (some of us at least) profess our selves to be members of, teacheth no unpeaceable doctrines, is guilty of no such practices. It imposeth no Articles on our belief, as necessary to our Salvation, but the Ancient Creeds; no terms of Communion, but such reasonable orders and decencies as are free from all appearance of Idolatry and Superstition, or any thing else that is unlawful; as will appear to any rational man, that shall take the pains to consider, and will judge impartially: nothing that is more burthensome or grievous, than the Rites and usages of the Primitive Christian Church were; which assertions I have in this place lately proved, and divers of our Divines  
in,



in their books have fully done it, to the shame of Fanatical Gainsayers. As to the concerns of civil peace, our Church, with Christ and his Apostles, teacheth active, chearful, conscientious obedience to the King, and subordinate Rulers in all lawful things, and quiet submission to the penalties of not obeying, when the things required are unlawful, plainly, certainly so: And that we are not in this, nor in any case to resist. Suitable to this have been the practices of the people of this peaceable Church: Among whom there hath not yet been found a Rebel. We never heard of a Church of *England*-man in the late wars against the King, nor of a Sectary for him.

But 4. *The Faith deliver'd to the Saints*, was a reasonable Faith; *the understanding of man is the Candle of the Lord, Prov. 20. 27.* The light of Reason is his light; with this *The true light hath enlightned every one that cometh into the world, Joh. 1. 9.* and one light is not contrary to another, there is difference in degree, but no opposition of Nature. Faith and Reason accord: Yea, Faith is an act of Reason: 'tis the highest reason to believe in God: and the belief of our reason, is an act of Faith, *viz.* Faith in the truth and goodness of God, that would not give us faculties to delude and deceive us, when we rightly exercise and employ

employ them. By Faith Reason is further enlightened, and by the use of Reason Faith is applied. Religion and Reason sweetly agree; and nothing can be Religious that is unreasonable. Religion is a reasonable service. And by this Character Popery is disproved also. For that imposeth on the practice and minds of men, things that are extremely unreasonable and absurd, as Articles of Religion: Such are the worship of invisible beings, by Images of Wood or Stone, and especially the Doctrine of Transubstantiation which is full of Contradictions; as that the same body can be in a thousand places at once; that at the same time it may be bigger, and less than it self; that it may move towards and from it self; That it may be divided not into parts, but wholes: These, and numerous other absurdities and contradictions, to the reason of mankind are contain'd in the senseless mystery of Popish Transubstantiation. To defend which, the Doctors of that Church are put upon this miserable shift of denying all reason in Religion, even the greatest and most fundamental Article of it, *That the same thing can be, and not be:* which some of them say is the only method to confute Hereticks. And while Reason and our Faculties are acknowledg'd, we cannot entertain their non-sence, nor be answer'd in our just opposition.

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positions of their gross absurdities.

On the other side, the Character of a reasonable Faith condemns the Sects, the greatest part of whose Divinity is made up of senseless, absurd notions, set forth in unintelligible Fantastical Phrases; and these they account the heights of spirituality and mystery, upon which they value and boast themselves, as the only knowing, the only spiritual people. When there is nothing in all their pretended heights and spiritualities, but vain imagination and dreaming; and in v. 8. of this Epistle they are described by this Character, *ὄντας ὕμνους*, Dreamers. And as the light of Sense and Reason dispels the vain Images of Dreams, so these admitted would cure Fanatical impostures and delusions. For which cause there is nothing they so vehemently declaim against as Reason, under the notion of carnal, and as an enemy to the Spirit, and the things of it. There is indeed a carnal Reason, that is enmity to truth and goodness; but that is not the reason of our minds, but the reason of our appetite, passion, and corrupt interest; which is not reason truly so called, no more than an Ape is a man. But for want of thus distinguishing the things that so differ, Enthusiasts rail violently against all Reason, as the grand adversary of the truths and mysteries of the Gospel.

Gospel. Their Tenents that she calls so will not bear that light.

But the Church of *England* teacheth no opinions, no mysteries that need such a desperate course to defend them. Its Articles of Faith are all contain'd in the Ancient Christian Creeds, which are no way opposite to Reason in any Article, yea, Reason either proves or defends them all. So that we never give out at this weapon, but are ready to use it upon all occasions against Atheists and Infidels of all sorts. The Church of *England* owns no Religion but what is reasonable.

5. *The Faith deliver'd to the Saints* was certain; it was deliver'd to them by those that had it from the holy Spirit of God, in the way of immediate inspiration. Those holy men spake as they were inspired. And that they were really so, was no fond imagination, or bold presumption, but a truth assured by those mighty miracles they were enabled to perform. Those are Gods Seal, and the grand confirmation of a commission from him: and to this proof of their Doctrines, both Christ and his Apostles continually appealed. Here is the firm reasonable Foundation of the Christian certainty: The truths we believed are confirmed by Miracles, than which there can be no greater evidence.

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But



But now the *Roman Church* destroys this ground of certainty by a multitude of lying wonders, which they impudently obtrude upon the belief of the people, for proof and confirmation of their false and corrupt Religion; the immediate consequence of which is a suspicion thereby brought upon the true Miracles; and here is way made for Scepticism and uncertainty in the greatest, and most Sacred Christian Doctrines. And besides, the Church of *Rome* having introduced among these many doubtful, uncertain, and many certainly false opinions, and imposed them upon the faith of its votaries, under the same obligations as it doth the most fundamental Articles; what can be the consequence, but that those who discover the error, or uncertainty of some of those pretended propositions of Faith, should doubt all the rest? And indeed since the main assurance is placed in the Infallibility of that Church, for which there is so no reason, and so much plain evidence to the contrary: Since themselves cannot tell where that boasted Infallibility is, whether in Pope or Council, if we should allow them any such, it follows that their Faith is precarious, and hath no foundation at all.

In like manner the Sects among us resolve all their assurance either into a bare belief, or the testimony

Timony of a private Spirit; for their ground of crediting the Scriptures is but this Testimony; and consequently whatever they receive from hence bottoms here. The Papists believe the Scripture on the Testimony of the Church, and these believe them on the Testimony of the Spirit, that is in earnest, the suggestions and resolutions of their own, *viz.* they believe because they will believe, and they find themselves inclin'd unto it.

And upon the same reason, when the imagination and humour alters they may cease to believe, or believe the contrary. And there is not any thing in the world more various and uncertain than the suggestions and impulses of a private Spirit. Besides, the Sects also have vastly multiplied Articles of Faith, and made all their private opinions sacred, calling them Gospel truths, precious truths, saving truths, and the like; when they are but uncertainties at the best, and usually false, and senseless imaginations; by which way also they expose the whole body of Christian Principles to suspicion, and so weaken the Faith of some, and destroy the Faith of others.

But the Church of *England* secures the certainty of our Faith, by resolving it into the Scriptures, the true founts of Infallibility, and the be-  
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lief of that into the Testimony of the Spirit in the true sense, *viz.* that Testimony that God gave by his Spirit to Christ and his Apostles, in those miraculous works he enabled them to perform: They did not only bear witness of themselves, that, as our Saviour argues with the *Jews*, *Luk. 11. 48.* would not have signified much: The Father bore witness with them, *John 15. 8.* and the works they performed by his power, were the sure testimony: *Believe me for the works sake*, saith our Saviour. Here is the ground of certainty. And the Church of *England* entertains no Articles of Faith, but those principles that have been so confirm'd, that is, none but what are evidently contain'd in the Holy Scriptures. Whereas the *Roman Church* (to mention no other) have made the absurd Doctrine of Transubstantiation, sacred, though it is not only not contained in Scripture but contrary to the reason, and even to the sound senses of mankind. And if neither reason, nor so much as our senses, may be believ'd, what assurance can we have of any thing? A ground is here laid for everlasting Scepticism and uncertainty. And the Sects have laid the same in their numerous, silly tenents, that are contrary to some of the most fundamental principles of Reason. Nothing of which, can with  
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any shew, be objected against this Church.

6. *The Faith delivered to the Saints*, was Catholick. 'Twas deliver'd to all the Saints, entertain'd by all:—and was not only the opinion and belief of a prevailing Faction, or of particular men in Corners. The Commission given the Disciples, was to go and teach all Nations, and to preach the Gospel to every creature, and accordingly it was widely diffused; and all that profest the name of Christ, were instructed in his Faith and Religion; in all the articles and duties of it, that were essential and necessary: In these they joyn'd in holy love and communion, till Sects came among them, that introduced damnable Heresies, contrary to the doctrine they had received: These divided from the Unity of the pure Catholick Church, and separated themselves from it, gathering into select companies of their own, under pretence of more Truth and Holiness.

After this manner, the Church of *Rome*; which had for some ages been eminent in the Catholick Church, did at last corrupt, and introduce divers unsound doctrines and usages, unknown to the Ancient Catholicks; and being great and powerful, it assumed the name of the Catholick Church to it self, and condemn'd all other Christians as Hereticks, when it was it self.



self but a grand Sect, against whose depraved doctrines and ways, there was a Church in all ages that did protest. For the *Greek Churches*, which are of as large extent as theirs, never assented to them; and divers other Christians in all times, bore Testimony against those errors and depravations. This Sect was large and numerous indeed, but 'tis not the number, but the principles, make the Catholick; Principles conformable to those that were deliver'd to the Saints. From these they have departed. And the lesser Sects among us have done the same, by the many vain additions that they have made to the Faith, and their unjust Separation from that Church, which retains the whole body of Catholick Doctrines and main Practices; without the mixture of any thing Heretical or unlawful. A Church that doth not damn all the world besides her own members, as the *Roman Church*, and divers of the Sects do, but extends her Charity to all Christians, though many of them are under great mistakes, and so is truly Catholick both in her Principles and Affections, I mean the Church of *England* as now established by Law, which God preserve in its purity. Amen.

FINIS.

A  
SERMON

Preached at the

FUNERAL

O F

Mr. Jos. Glanvil,

Late Rector of BATH, and

Chaplain in Ordinary to His Majesty: Who  
dyed at his Rectory of Bath, the fourth  
of November, 1680. and was Buried  
there the Ninth of the same Month.

---

By Jos. Pleydell, Arch-Deacon of Chichester.

---

L O N D O N,

Printed for Henry Mortlock at the Sign of the *Phoenix*  
in St. Pauls Church-yard, and the *White Hart* in  
*Westminster-Hall.* 1681.



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Mr. J. C. Galt

in 1907-1908

1801

REVEL. XIV. Ver. 13.

*And I heard a voice from Heaven, saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which dye in the Lord, from henceforth, yea saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.*

**T**He more attentively we consider the Christian Religion in any of its parts, we find greater grounds for the confirmation both of its Author and excellency; so infinitely does it surpass all those writings of that nature, which the great Sages of the World, have, with so much superciliousness on their part, and admiration from their respective followers, I may add too (all things considered) not without meriting due praise from us, delivered to their Scholars.

And this will appear evident and undeniable if we but parallel them in any of the chief heads; for instance, in the principles upon which our Religion does proceed, the precepts it contains, and the rewards it appoints; which division will comprize the summ of what we profess: In all which the great Masters of Heathen wisdom, do plainly discover, either a great deal of Ignorance, or



malice, in prevaricating that light they had reflected upon them from Jewish tradition, so that it may be well doubted whether their Symbolick Divinity were not design'd rather to conceal their own Ignorance in what they pretended to, than to secure the rites and mysteries thereof from the vulgar's profanation. For example :

1. Take first the *Principles*, those truths that are the Basis and foundation of our Religion ; such as are the Being and Nature of God, the Creation of the World, the Fall of man, and his Redemption by a *Messias*, the Immortality of the Soul, and the Resurrection ; 'tis plain the whole Philosophick world had none, or but a very imperfect knowledge of almost all of them ; However some, of their lavish Charity, have endeavour'd to squeeze as much from their writings : Nay, that they were not without some knowledge of our greatest Mysteries, viz. of a *Messias* under their *Daimono-Latria*, and even of the Trinity in *Plato's Triad*, and the Resurrection of the body, under the Indians *Palm-genesis* : But no body that has any veneration either for the Scriptures, or but for Truth in general, but must see and acknowledge that all this is but corrupted from them.

Nor may we deny this further, that whatever Notions of this kind they had, were but traditional

nal in respect of their Origine, and conjectural in reference to their ambiguity and uncertainty.

2. The like is to be said of their *Rules* and *Precepts* of virtuous living. For we may not detract thus much from them, that they have recommended many excellent *Institutes* to their *Sects*. You shall collect among them many very admirable sayings, such as these;

*To know our selves; to abstain from vice; to bear afflictions: to do justly, and speak truly &c. &c. &c. do as we would be done by; and many more.*

Indeed for that kind of Divinity which was deducible from the *Rules* of common prudence and observation, and depended not chiefly or solely upon Divine Revelation, they have done extraordinary well: And if they had not furnish'd us with so many famous examples of *Virtue* too, it would not reflect so much upon the *Professors* of Christianity, which in the *spirituality* of its precepts has as far exceeded all that they have writ, as some of their *Lives* have most of ours; though that be not to be imputed to our Religion, unless it were justly chargeable upon the vitiosity or defect of its Principles or Rules.

Thus miserably however do we compensate the Divine culture; and as if Nature abhorring so great a disparity betwixt mankind, would thus balance.



lance the Heathen with the Christian World; by opposing their Imperfect Knowledge, but severer Vertue, to our diviner Laws, but greater licentiousness in Practice: Many of them having, by as great proportions exceeded us in their endeavours after goodness, as we do them in the knowledge and other means of it.

3. Last of all (which brings it to our present subject) Christianity propounds nothing but upon the fairest and surest encouragement imaginable. For the happiness of our Religion is both transcendently superiour to their discoveries and accounts of it; and then also we are sufficiently and unquestionably assur'd hereof, i. e. 'tis not recommended to us upon plausible persuasions and inconclusive arguments, but in the genuine sense of St. Paul's expressions, 1. Corinth. 2. 4. *in demonstration of the Spirit and Power.*

So that we see there is a kind of peculiar excellency in the Holy Scriptures, above all the Systems of the greatest Moralists; the foundation of our Obedience being laid upon clearer and better principles, the practice of our obedience being carried higher by the spirituality of its commands, and the rewards of our obedience being incomparably greater, than what we can conceive, much less could they promise or bestow.

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'Tis

'Tis the last of these that is contain'd in the Text, and for which I am to be further accountable to ye in the prosecution of the words I have read. *And I heard a voice from Heaven, saying unto me, Write, Blessed, &c.* Wherein we have these following particulars principally to be observed.

1. The happiness of good men describ'd by its general nature, they are *blessed*, and by its integral parts, they *rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.*

2. The *Security and Evidence* upon which this happiness is promis'd and asserted, *yea saith the Spirit.*

3. The *time of its perfection and accomplishment*, partly in this life, but not fully nor completely till death, *saying, Blessed are the dead that dye in the Lord.*

4. And lastly, the *Influence* which the consideration of these premisses ought to have upon us, both in *Life and Death*, in reference to *Obedience and Patience.* And.

I. To begin with the *description* of that happiness, those rewards, which are propounded to us for the encouragement of our *Obedience and Patience*: Which are so great, that I am utterly ignorant by what measures to describe them to ye.

The



The nature of that Celestial bliss as far transcending all our present felicities, by which we should judge of it; as it does the very capacity of our meriting it.

Sir Francis Bacon has observ'd, We can have but a very imperfect accompt of those things, which exceed any whit near those extreams of *Nothing* and *Infinity*: because either by their parvity or immensity, they elude or confound our knowledge.

And especially the latter, which choak the understanding; and is like the beholding of the Sun, whose light and lustre, by which we discern other objects, mairs, and dimms our sight.

Such is the transcendent excellency of our future bliss, at once the delight and amazement of our Intellectuals.

In the description whereof our highest expressions are so far from being hyperbolical, that they amount but to a *Litotes*; so that after our utmost endeavours we must content our selves with St. Pauls account of it, in his First and Second Epistles to the *Corinthians*, his *ἄρρητος*, and his *ἡ ἄβυσσος λαλῶν*, *unutterable*, for that I take to be the meaning (and not as we render it *unlawful*) of *ἡ ἄβυσσος*, and also *unconceivable*.

1 Ep. c. 2.

v. 9.

2 Ep. ch.

12. v. 4.

So

So inevitably should we diminish the Glory of Heaven, by any expression, illustration, or parallel whatever.

Which happiness of ours consists of, and is integrated by these two parts.

The total privation of all evil.

And the aggregate enjoyment of all good.

Both which as they are necessarily requisite to the nature of the thing, so are they contain'd in the very notion of the word.

For as the plurality of the Hebrew word *אַשְׁרֵי* [Ashrei] ostendit omnigenam beatitudinem; so more expressly does the Etymology of the Greek word answer hereunto, *μὴ κακῶν* either from *μὴ κακῶν*, immunity from evil, or *μὴ χαλῶν* extremity of joy; and accordingly 'tis describ'd in my Text, first Privatively, and then Positively.

1. For the *privative* part, *Rest from their labours*, or which is all one, Immunity from Evil, by which this happiness is oft-times describ'd: for though the privation hereof simply and absolutely signifie no part hereof, the absence especially; for by that reason you might call a stock or stone or any other insensible creature happy, as by the other a Horse or Dog might be said to be so when dead: yet inasmuch as it is more than a negation, namely the being deliver'd from a world of misery wherewith we are now infested, and more

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which we had deserved, and were once obnoxious to, which we also then behold in others of the same make and nature with us; the contemplation hereof, by which it so widely differs from both the Instances, must needs fill our mind with an ineffable delight and satisfaction.

Or at least if this indolency be no part of our happiness, yet is it so absolutely needful to it, that we cannot tell well how to conceive of it without this; and much less can such a thing be as perfect happiness and degrees of misery conjoyn'd together.

Nor did ever any Sect of Philosophers think otherwise, but those sullen and self will'd Stoicks. That ever any body should be so mad to cry out in the extremity of pain and misery, *Quàm suave, quàm dulce hoc est, quàm hoc non curo!* And I cannot but laugh at Possidonius his Rant, *Nil agis, O Dolor, &c.*

There are divers instances of such who have born most exquisite miseries even to admiration, as well out of a kind of hardiness of nature, as greatness of mind; and in that they were less miserable than the delicate and impatient: but whence was it? either from necessity, or hope, or both; this is Christian-like, but that is brutish, if it were sufficient without t'other, but 'tis not, for perpetuity would certainly render any evil intolerable.

So

So that we are so far from being completely happy as long as any disease or inquietude of mind or body does attend us; that the hope of being delivered is the only argument that can afford us any solid and rational comfort in our afflictions: For as to fatality, *hoc ipsum est*, said *Augustus* when one urg'd it; and for the disease of Impatience, 'tis (as one has excellently observ'd) no proper consideration of comfort, but only an art of managing our trouble; so as not to make it greater than really it is.

2. The other part of our happiness, and indeed the main, we call *positive*, and consists in the enjoyment of all good; and is what *St. John* intends by *their works following them*; i. e. they shall then receive all those glorious rewards that God has promis'd to good and righteous men for all their service and obedience. We should in vain go about to recount them, they are so many and so great.

In two things the Scriptures chiefly place it; in the *vision*, and in the *fruition* of God. This is *life Eternal*, saith this very *St. John* in his Gospel, *to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ*; Joh. 17. 3. and again in his 1 Ep. Ch. 3. v. 2. *It doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he doth appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.* The other is call'd the *being with Christ*, and the be- Phil. 1. 23.



ing united to him. *St. John 17. 21. That they all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us.* But this is not to exclude the other instances of our happiness, indeed it comprehends all the rest.

For what are all the pleasures and contentments of the World, but as so many rays of that Sun and emanations of that fountain?

They are all contain'd with much more perfection in God, than they were created in their own natures: Whereupon it follows that they which are admitted into his presence, have all the goodness and perfections of all the creatures in the world united in God.

So that whatever can delight either body or mind, there it is; nor will there be any room to wish for or imagine more than what we have; there being in him (as an ingenious man expresseth it) such a various Identity, that the fruition of him at once satisfies and creates desires, that without satiety, this without disquiet.

3. To which if we add the *eternal duration* of this state, we attribute unto it a kind of complication of Infinities, a potential Infinity in the subject, actual in the object, and eternal in the continuance of it:

Which single consideration is sufficient to advance it to an infinite preference above all earthly

ly things imaginable; because these things being founded in matter, and that being in continual flux and motion, here can be nothing permanent and lasting. Nor indeed would that be any addition to our present felicity. 'Tis variety that makes these things appear excellent; their mutability, is both the life and death of all present delights.

A few repetitions make us abhor our food; in less than a night and a day we grow weary of our Beds; and 'tis so in all the other instances of our Nature, and 'tis more so in those of our corruption.

But 'tis otherwise in the attainment of the ultimate end, where all our appetites are arrested and detain'd.

Indeed we no sooner experience these things in the fruition, but we straightway nauseate them; finding them so pitifully allay'd with mixtures of evil, and prove so miserably short of what we desire and expect from them. But 'tis otherwise there, the excellency of those Celestial Objects will disappoint our expectation by their transcendency, as much as in all other fruitions their emptiness is wont to do.

So that Eternity, though but a circumstance which does only superinduce a kind of extremity or perfection to what it is conjoyn'd with; and  
may



may as well be drawn in to enhance our misery, (for what more than this makes the condition of the damn'd so horribly dreadful, whereby they are excluded from all hope, the very seed and lowest degree of felicity?) Yet is it so necessary to what we are speaking of, as that without it those joys of Heaven, though otherwise absolute and infinite, would suffer a contradiction, and become imperfect: And that not only for the future, but the present, by introducing such passions as must needs debase and allay the highest delights.

So that by being thus secur'd in the possession of our happiness, we receive thereby an unspeakable addition to it.

II. Proceed we next to shew you the *Security* and *Evidence*, upon which this happiness is promis'd and asserted, and whether it bear any proportion to our duty and the *Rewards* of it, for so we are allow'd to call them; though not upon the account of merit, yet by reason of their necessary connexion with, dependance upon, and that kind (such a one as 'tis) of proportion they bear to each other.

There is a two-fold evidence God Almighty has given us, for the strengthening of our hope, and confirming of our faith, in the belief and expectation

expectation of the other World. The first *moral*, grounded upon the testimony of the Spirit; the other I call *natural*, and is grounded in the things themselves.

1. The first evidence of our future bliss, is the testimony of the Spirit, express in the Text, *Yea, saith the Spirit*. But then we must have a care of what kind of Testimony of the Spirit we understand it: for, understand it as 'tis vulgarly taken, for some act or operation wrought in and upon us, besides the Enthusiasm of it, fain would I be satisfy'd, what validity can there be in such a testimony, as it self needs something else to confirm it? for so this testimony of the Spirit is to be tryed by its concordance and agreement to the word of God: nor do I know any other way to distinguish it from a motion or suggestion of the Devil's besides. And though to err thus in this single instance may not be very pernicious, for I am not mighty solicitous, how it was wrought, so there be a firm perswasion in us of this truth; yet in other cases I know how dangerous it is, nor is it safe in this, for it leaves a passage open and unguarded to down-right Atheism.

By the testimony of the Spirit therefore I understand the word of God, or the Scriptures as made known and prov'd to us to be deriv'd from this Divine Spirit, which we may call the outward



ward testimony thereof: for though St. *John* knew this by the other way, as most certainly all others did who received any Revelation; yet never was any other than the person himself assur'd that way.

Nor do I make degrees of more or less certainty in the way or manner of the Spirit's revealing a thing; for the Apostles were as well assur'd of the infallibility of their doctrine before they wrought any miracles, as we are by them: but we were not nor could be so.

But this notwithstanding, in respect of us we must admit of such degrees; for no body I hope will be so blasphemous to equal such private dictates they have in their own breast to the divine authority of the Holy Scriptures.

So then I make this to be the *moral* evidence of future happiness: God hath said it in his word. And this I call a *moral* certainty, not in opposition to divine and infallible; as they are sometimes contradistinguished; but only to natural: for we can desire no greater evidence, we cannot have a higher confirmation of any truth, than the veracity of Heaven to attest it.

I do not know any proposition that carries greater self-evidence than this, That God ought to be believ'd in what he says; and therefore though we may question the truth of the Revelation,  
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tion, 'tis impossible to do so of any thing we acknowledge to be so revealed.

So that the stress of this point lyes upon that great and necessary *præcognitum* in our Religion; namely, the Divine authority of the Holy Scriptures. Upon which postulate if we proceed, there is as great certainty of the truth of this proposition, That good men shall enjoy eternal happiness after this life; as if we should again hear that Daughter of voice, and God himself should sensibly attest it.

2. But there is another ground or evidence of our future happiness which I call *natural*, because it depends upon that Intrinsic Relation and consent there is between goodness and it; the difference between them being only in degree, like the dawning of the Morning to the lustre of the Noon. For what is it to be happy but to be united to God? and what does unite us to God but Love? and what is the love of God but Religion? And if you remove but all inward imperfections, and all outward impediments, there remains no difference at all. So that Virtue and Piety do not only dispose and prepare us for Heaven and Salvation, but we thereby receive and experience the very beginnings and anticipations of it.

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And



And though in respect of the mutability of our will and affections toward God and goodness in this world, we cannot be infallibly assur'd of it as to our own particulars; because every alteration in the one produceth a like answerable effect as to the other: Yet in the general we may, even from hence, be very well assur'd hereof; because there is nothing more requir'd to the completing of our essential happiness, than an advance and progression in the same vertuous track.

And however it looks in a Divine, if we will speak rationally to the thing, we must allow the love and hatred of God to be the true natural causes of our salvation and damnation, even of their very eternity; it being naturally impossible to be other than happy while we love God, and contrariwise if we hate him; and this is the only instant cause of its continuation through all the durations of Eternity. And to remove your astonishment, see, how in this lower world, many stupendous and admirable works are daily produc'd which were mean and unnoted while they lay hid and contain'd in the seminal beginnings; after the same wonderful manner by divers minute gradations does this divine Creature grow up from its first formation in our trembling and unstable desires, to  
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the stature and perfection of Everlasting Glory.

And yet there remains less doubt if we take in the Consideration of the Divine nature. How else will you vindicate the Justice of God in all the odd and confused occurrences of this World? Where's your infinite goodness and bounty, that suffers its servants always to be neglected? what will become of an almighty and omniscient Justice if sinners are never call'd to an accompt? Or one, or t'other cannot be.

III. 'Tis true indeed the compleating of this bliss (which brings us to our next head) is neither promis'd, nor to be had in this life. 'Tis at *Death* these rewards become due and payable.

———*Dici que beatus  
Ante obitum nemo, supremâque funera possit.*

It has been the constant method of Divine providence, to cause the most excellent things to follow and arise from the most uncouth and unlikely. Thus in the Creation order springs from confusion, and the Light is made to attend the darkness.

Contrary to the methods observ'd by Nature, where the causes are ever more worthy



than their effects from their first beginning downward.

Now as he is pleas'd to transcend and deviate from the tracts and capacities of natural Agents, thereby to assert his Prerogative, and render his omnipotency more conspicuous to the world: So is he no less delighted to use the same recesses in displaying his Grace; evermore ushering in his mercies with the Black Rod, thereby enhancing and endearing our subsequent refreshments.

And though the goodness of those celestial inhabitants, and the happiness of their condition, need neither foyl nor artifice to render that or their acknowledgements of the Divine favour greater: Yet however if we consider these things as a reward and encouragement of our obedience, the proceeding thus is but regular and necessary; that we should do our work before we receive our wages, and finish our undertaking, before we demand satisfaction.

Earnest and Security Heaven has vouchsaf'd us, but to deposite the whole in hand, this were, not to encourage but bribe our Obedience. This were to destroy Morality, and turn Vertue into Nature.

Not

Nor yet is the Divine goodness less communicable in this life, but we are not so capable of receiving it.

For look as in Nature neither the single excellency of the Object or the Agent alone is sufficient to produce any notable effect, but both are requir'd: So likewise in Religion, all the effects of the divine grace and bounty (though that be free and infinite) are limited and determin'd by our capacities and reception.

So that while our Appetites, those *ordini desideria*, as they are call'd in Scripture, that are to be the receptacles of all this Glory, are, either replenish'd with the vain and sinful objects of this Life, or, are straitned and contracted by the weakness and imperfection of this dull and lumpish matter, they must be rid of the one and de-vested of the other, and then, we should be instantly happy.

You have seen the happiness of the Christian man; there are indeed encouragements of another nature, namely, earthly blessings and temporal rewards, our whole present interest, unless it happen to interfere at any time with the other. Religion has descended to the securing of these too, and that not only by moral designation, but by a proper and natural efficiency; so that we cannot better prosecute our present interest,



rest, than by the methods of Religion. And by this gracious and happy complication of the *τὸ θεῖον* and the *τὸ ἀνθρώπινον* together, they are made to become helpful and assisting to each other, serving reciprocally as a means or motive either to other.

But this encouragement is neither proper nor adequate to Christianity; since it may be as well pursu'd by natural, as by divine rules, better perhaps by diabolical arts than either, nothing experimentally so enriching men, as sordidness, oppression, and other violences and frauds. The Devil in all likelihood, giving the fairest prospect, and most likely possession of the Kingdoms and glory of this world.

But they are things, I have shewn you, of a nature infinitely more sublime, that Christianity propounds to its observers; The rewards of our Religion, exceeding as well the capacities of our Nature, as all those other things. To the attainment whereof, as all vicious practices are extremely contrary; so have all the others Philosophick transactions been miserably vain.

Some weak and glimmering light the Heathen had of these things; which it is not certain whether they collected from some fragments of tradition, or extracted from the principles of  
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natural reason; but which way ever it came, it was so weak and imperfect, as serv'd to shadow, not help to discover, but eclipse the transcendent excellency of that State; till, as the Great Apostle of the Gentiles saith, *Life and Immortality were brought to light by the Gospel.* 1 Tim. i. 10.

And indeed without this all other proposals were unsuitable to its professors; and disproportionate to the difficulty and severities of Religion. Cicero saith, "None ought to be deem'd "a vertuous or a just man, that will be allur'd "or affrighted from his duty, by any advantage or disadvantage whatever: But who, trow ye, would abide both these, upon no other consideration, than barely to have acted according to the sentiments of right Reason, or in hope to acquire an insignificant fame of Vertue, of which they could have no knowledge or remembrance after death?

And for this cause I judge the Stoicks more absurd in their morals, than the Epicureans, considering the principles that is upon which they built. For 'tis the premise and not the inference of theirs, that's so urg'd by the Apostle, *Let us eat and drink,* 1 Cor. 15. 32. But now the Christian Religion propounds such overtures to our Obedience and Patience,



as may justly and reasonably encourage us thereunto.

IV. For a Conclusion, let us take in the Importance of that Phrase of [*dying in the Lord*] which relates primarily to Martyrdome; but must also be extended to as many as live and dye in the faith of the Holy Jesus.

The result of all is this: That we would so consider this happiness, as every of our great interest, that we forfeit not our propriety therein, by a vicious and sinful life. There's nothing else can render it hazardous or doubtful, but that, which indeed in the very nature of the thing renders it impossible. Let us not repeat *E/au's* folly, sell our birth-right for a trifle; and for the sake of some pitiful lust proscribe our selves out of our celestial inheritance.

Neither let us condemn our happiness for being feasible. Were wilful poverty and certain Martyrdome, part of our duty, and inseparable appendages of our Religion, there is temptation enough in the proposals, to make us conflict with the greatest difficulties, and overcome them.

When Christianity was thus attended, and had nothing else to recommend it self to the world, besides the reasonableness of its injunctions,

ons, with what holy violence did those blessed Saints storm Heaven, and with a strange eagerness pursue Martyrdome ! But now as if the fervour of our Devotion were only kindled and maintain'd by *Antiperistasis* : Now I say the Impediments are remov'd, and Religion is become a part of our Civil obedience, and made necessary to our secular interests, and guarded with a great many other temporal Phylacteries, men are yet more hardly wrought upon to be Religious, the consideration of a single lust shall be able to weigh down all.

And if any would seem to have a greater zeal for it than ordinary, as if they were in love with the troubles of Religion, and not the thing ; they suffer their heat to spend it self in little piques and contentions, and about things of none or ill moment, in maintaining of parties, and opposing their Superiours, and not in Devotion, Obedience, Charity, Humility, and the like, as they ought.

In short, Christians, let the thoughts of this blessedness, excite our affections Heaven-ward, and quicken our endeavours : Let it animate us against all difficulties, and buoy us up above all adversities ; Let it cheer us in our duty, quiet us in affliction, and comfort us in death. That so living unto Christ, we may

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at last dye in him, and in the end be for ever blessed.

And now to accommodate all to our present case. It has pleas'd God to take away this extraordinary man, for such, considering all things, we must needs allow him; and because 'twas somewewhat early, I think of Dr. *Hammond's* notion of *indign* in the Text, the sooner the better, the better for him, no doubt.

I had once thought to have given you his Character, but I am not ashamed to tell you, I found me not able to do it worthy of him. And calling to mind a saying of one of the Roman Historians, I soon desisted from any further attempt of it; who when he was reckoning up some of the great men of that age, *Virgil* and *Ovid*, *Linie* and *Salust*, and going to commend them, stops, and concludes thus: "But of men of Eminency, as their admiration is great, so is their censure full of difficulty."

As to those Relations that are more nearly interested in this solemnity; I would beseech them to remember, that all Indecency and excess of Grief, for our deceased friends, must needs reflect upon the memory of the dead, or the discretion of the survivors. God enable them to bear it: And supply this loss to them by his Grace and Providence: Let me say, and to the Church of *England*,

*gland, by increasing the number of such men, of  
no worse Learning, Integrity, and Courage;  
that are able, and dare defend her against  
the encroachments of Popery and Fanati-  
cisme.*

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*Now to God only wise be Glory through Jesus Christ  
for ever. Amen.*

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